

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_pasternack@energy.senate.gov.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Tuesday, May 13, at 2:30 p.m. in room 562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct an oversight hearing on “the successes and shortfalls of Title IV of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act: Twenty Years of Self-Governance”.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 224-2251.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 8, 2008, at 2:30 p.m., in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 8, 2008 at 10 a.m. in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to hold a hearing entitled, “Goods Movement on our Nation’s Highways.”

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 8, 2008, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “More Work, Less Resources: Social Security Field Offices Struggle to Deliver Service to the Public”.

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, to conduct a hearing entitled “Cancer: Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century” on Thursday, May 8, 2008. The hearing will commence at 9 a.m. in room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 8, 2008, to conduct a hearing.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, to conduct an executive business meeting on Thursday, May 8, 2008, at 10 a.m. in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 8, 2008, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a closed hearing on intelligence matters.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 8, 2008, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, “From Candidates to Change Makers: Recruiting and Hiring the Next Generation of Federal Employees.”

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CRAIG. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Colin Jones, a congressional fellow in my office from the Idaho National Laboratory, have floor privileges during the duration of my comments.

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

COMMEMORATING THE DEDICATION AND SACRIFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 729, S. Res. 537.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 537) commemorating and acknowledging the dedication and sacrifice made by the men and women who have

lost their lives while serving as law enforcement officers.

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously reported S. Res. 537 to the Senate floor. In recognition of those officers who lost their lives in 2007, the full Senate has now passed this resolution. I thank Senators SPECTER, KENNEDY, DURBIN, KOHL, FEINSTEIN, SCHUMER, HATCH, WHITEHOUSE, BIDEN, CARDIN, and BAUCUS for joining me in sponsoring this resolution. And I thank the full Senate for showing its strong support and appreciation of America’s law enforcement officers by unanimously passing this resolution. It is something in which we can all take pride.

Last year, in 2007, 181 law enforcement officers died while serving in the line of duty. That is a regrettable and significant increase from just 1 year earlier. Tragically, it is the most line-of-duty deaths since 2001 and the losses from September 11 of that year. The magnitude of this loss should remove any doubts in Congress that it is necessary to give these men and women everything they need to stay safe, and to do their jobs as effectively as they can.

Currently, more than 900,000 men and women who guard our communities do so at great risk. Since the first recorded police death in 1792, there have been more than 18,200 law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice. There is lots of talk about the war on crime. Our law enforcement officers are all too often the casualties in that effort, and the officers who lost their lives in 2007 are a stark reminder that we must not let up in our support of those who work day-in and day-out in the service of their communities and fellow citizens.

I also take this opportunity to recognize that the names of 358 fallen officers will be added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial on May 13 during a candlelight vigil that will be held in their honor. These are officers from the past and present whose memory will be preserved at the memorial, ensuring that their bravery and sacrifice will not be forgotten.

National Peace Officers Memorial Day provides the people of the United States, in their communities, in their State capitals, and in the Nation’s Capital, with the opportunity to honor and reflect on the extraordinary service and sacrifice given year after year by those members of our police forces. More than 20,000 peace officers are expected to gather in Washington in the days leading up to May 15, to join with the families of their fallen comrades. It is right that the Senate show its respect on this occasion, and I thank all Senators for joining me in honoring their service and their memory by approving this bipartisan resolution.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be

S. RES. 556

Whereas charter schools deliver high-quality education and challenge all students to reach their potential;

Whereas charter schools provide thousands of families with diverse and innovative educational options for their children;

Whereas charter schools are public schools authorized by a designated public entity that are responding to the needs of our communities, families, and students and promoting the principles of quality, choice, and innovation;

Whereas, in exchange for the flexibility and autonomy given to charter schools, they are held accountable by their sponsors for improving student achievement and for their financial and other operations;

Whereas 40 States and the District of Columbia have passed laws authorizing charter schools;

Whereas more than 4,300 charter schools are now operating in 40 States and the District of Columbia, serving more than 1,200,000 students;

Whereas, over the last 14 years, Congress has provided over \$2,237,256,000 in support to the charter school movement through facilities financing assistance and grants for planning, startup, implementation, and dissemination;

Whereas many charter schools improve their students' achievement and stimulate improvement in traditional public schools;

Whereas charter schools must meet the student achievement accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in the same manner as traditional public schools, and often set higher and additional individual goals to ensure that they are of high quality and truly accountable to the public;

Whereas charter schools give parents new freedom to choose their public schools, routinely measure parental satisfaction levels, and must prove their ongoing success to parents, policymakers, and their communities;

Whereas over 50 percent of charter schools report having a waiting list, and the total number of students on all such waiting lists is enough to fill over 1,100 average-sized charter schools;

Whereas charter schools nationwide serve a higher percentage of low-income and minority students than the traditional public school system;

Whereas charter schools have enjoyed broad bipartisan support from the President, Congress, State Governors and legislatures, educators, and parents across the United States; and

Whereas the 9th annual National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 5 through May 9, 2008, is an event sponsored by charter schools and grassroots charter school organizations across the United States to recognize the significant impacts, achievements, and innovations of charter schools: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes May 15, 2008, as "Peace Officers Memorial Day", in honor of the Federal, State, and local law enforcement officers that have been killed or disabled in the line of duty; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies, appreciation, and respect.

CONGRATULATING CHARTER SCHOOLS FOR THEIR ONGOING CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 556, which was submitted earlier today by Senator LANDRIEU.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 556) congratulating charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education, and for other purposes.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I am pleased today to rise in honor of National Charter School week. The role of charter schools has become increas-

ingly important as these institutions have become one of the fastest-growing innovative forces in education policy. In the past 4 years, 1,600 new charter schools opened and 500,000 additional public school students chose to enroll in charter schools. In the fall of 2007, 350 new public charter schools opened and an additional 115,000 public school students enrolled in these schools. Nationwide in 40 States and Washington, DC, over 4,300 public charter schools enroll more than 1.2 million public school students.

As many of you know, I have been a longtime advocate of charter schools, which not only help to better educate students, but can also help to build stronger, more prosperous cities. As incubators of innovation in education, public charter schools are an indispensable component of our Nation's educational landscape.

Back home in New Orleans, in the aftermath of the catastrophic devastation from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita came an opportunity to recreate a public school system through bold innovation and community involvement. The educational entrepreneurship of public charter schools has been integral to the city's recovery. They are inspiring positive changes throughout the system, as other schools work to cultivate the same benefits. Our hope is that all public schools in New Orleans will enjoy the same entrepreneurship, independence, and community involvement that the public charter schools have fostered.

Public charter schools were the first schools to open after the storm and they have since thrived. Today more than 57 percent of the city's public school students attend public charter schools, and more than half of our public schools are independently chartered, the highest percentage in the country.

Moreover, public charter schools are gaining momentum and support around the Nation. The recently released 2008 Public Charter School Dashboard included a national opinion poll that found that more than three out of four voters favor giving parents more options when choosing a public school for their children.

As we celebrate National Charter Schools Week with this resolution, it is my sincere hope that Congress will commit to supporting the growth of charter schools as critical tools for closing the achievement gap.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the 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 resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 556) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

(2) supports the ideas and goals of the 9th annual National Charter Schools Week; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to conduct appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to demonstrate support for charter schools during this week