

Whereas the men and women who bravely serve as first responders have found themselves on the front lines of homeland defense in the war against terrorism;

Whereas first responders are called upon in the event of a natural disaster, such as the tornados in Florida and the blizzard in Colorado in December 2006, the flooding in the Northeast in April 2007, the flooding in the Midwest in June 2008, and the wildfires in the West in July 2008;

Whereas the critical role of first responders was witnessed in the aftermath of the mass shooting at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, when the collaborative effort of police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians to secure the campus, rescue students from danger, treat the injured, and transport victims to local hospitals undoubtedly saved the lives of many students and faculty;

Whereas 900,000 police officers, 1,100,000 firefighters, and 891,000 emergency medical technicians risk their lives every day to make our communities safe;

Whereas these 900,000 sworn police officers from Federal, State, tribal, city, and county law enforcement agencies protect lives and property, detect and prevent crimes, uphold the law, and ensure justice;

Whereas these 1,100,000 firefighters, both volunteer and career, provide fire suppression, emergency medical services, search and rescue, hazardous materials response, response to terrorism, and critical fire prevention and safety education;

Whereas the 891,000 emergency medical professionals in the United States respond to and treat a variety of life-threatening emergencies, from cardiac and respiratory arrest to traumatic injuries;

Whereas these 2,661,000 "first responders" make personal sacrifices to protect our communities, as was witnessed on September 11, 2001, and in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and as is witnessed every day in cities and towns across the United States;

Whereas, according to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, a total of 1,671 law enforcement officers died in the line of duty during the past 10 years, an average of 1 death every 53 hours or 167 per year, and 181 law enforcement officers were killed in 2007;

Whereas, according to the United States Fire Administration, from 1996 through 2005 over 1500 firefighters were killed in the line of duty, and tens of thousands were injured;

Whereas 4 in 5 medics are injured on the job, more than 1 in 2 (52 percent) have been assaulted by a patient and 1 in 2 (50 percent) have been exposed to an infectious disease, and emergency medical service personnel in the United States have an estimated fatality rate of 12.7 per 100,000 workers, more than twice the national average;

Whereas most emergency medical service personnel deaths in the line of duty occur in ambulance accidents;

Whereas thousands of first responders have made the ultimate sacrifice;

Whereas, in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, firefighters, law enforcement officers, and emergency medical workers in the United States were universally recognized for the sacrifices they made on that tragic day, and should be honored each year as these tragic events are remembered;

Whereas there currently exists no national day to honor the brave men and women of the first responder community, who give so much of themselves for the sake of others; and

Whereas these men and women by their patriotic service and their dedicated efforts have earned the gratitude of Congress: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates September 25, 2008, as "National First Responder Appreciation Day" to honor and celebrate the contributions and sacrifices made by all first responders in the United States.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I rise to submit a resolution today that will designate September 25 as National First Responder Appreciation Day. Last year I introduced this resolution with my good friend and colleague Senator ROBERT CASEY and I am pleased Senator CASEY has joined me again in honoring our first responders. I am also pleased to be joined by Senators AKAKA, BENNETT, BROWN, CHAMBLISS, CLINTON, COLEMAN, CRAPO, DOMENICI, DURBIN, ENZI, HUTCHISON, INHOFE, KENNEDY, LANDRIEU, LEAHY, LIEBERMAN, MIKULSKI, MURRAY, PRYOR, ROCKEFELLER, SANDERS, STABENOW, STEVENS, VOINOVICH, WHITEHOUSE and WICKER in this important recognition of our men and women who keep us safe.

The contributions that our Nation's 1.1 million firefighters, 900,000 police officers, and 890,000 emergency medical professionals make in our communities are familiar to us all. Their heroics can be seen every night on our TV screens, read about in our papers, and heralded by the survivors of every modern disaster. From the wildfires in Colorado and California, the tragic events at Virginia Tech, and the horrific damage of Hurricanes Katrina, Gustav, and Ike, our first responders regularly risk their lives to protect property, uphold the law, and save the lives of others.

The duty of a first responder is never without risk and requires the courage to place the safety of others ahead of one's own. It is courage that compels a firefighter to rush into a burning building, a police officer to charge into an active shooter, and an emergency medical professional to perform precision lifesaving procedures in the most hazardous conditions imaginable. While all of these brave Americans know the risks involved, some make that ultimate sacrifice to save another, at the cost of their own life.

Every year over 100 firefighters and nearly 200 police officers are killed in the line of duty. And while some may not consider a career in the emergency medical services dangerous, EMS workers actually have an occupational fatality rate comparable to that of firefighters and police officers. I know I speak on behalf of all Americans when I express my sincerest appreciation for their service and sacrifice.

While we recognize our first responders for their sacrifices, we also acknowledge their everyday contributions that make our communities throughout America a safer place. In addition to battling fires, firefighters reach out through fire prevention and public education, like teaching our children about fire safety and proper emergency response. In addition to arresting criminals, police officers encourage communities to stay involved in crime prevention and cooperate with law enforcement to help make our

neighborhoods safer and more livable. If we or our loved ones experience a medical emergency, EMTs are there at a moment's notice to provide lifesaving care.

In many ways, our first responders embody the very best of the American spirit. With charity and compassion, these brave men and women commit themselves to preserving the highest standard of life we all enjoy in this great Nation. Through their actions they have become heroes to many, through their examples they have become role models to us all.

While various cities and towns have recognized the contributions made by their local first responders, there exists no national day to honor and thank these courageous men and women. The time has come to give our first responders the national day of appreciation that they deserve.

Designating September 25 as National First Responder Appreciation Day provides an opportunity for this institution and the people of the United States to honor first responders for their contributions, sacrifices, and dedication to public service.

I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting passage of this worthwhile resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 671—CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE ON ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 671

Whereas the University of Maryland School of Medicine was established in 1807, making it the first public and the fifth oldest medical school in the United States;

Whereas, in 1823, the University of Maryland School of Medicine became the first teaching hospital in the Nation with the construction of the Baltimore Infirmary and became the first medical school in the United States to institute a residency training program;

Whereas the School of Medicine was the founding school of the University of Maryland and is an integral part of the 11-campus University System of Maryland;

Whereas, at the Baltimore campus of the University of Maryland, the School of Medicine serves as the foundation for a large academic health center that combines medical education, biomedical research, patient care, and community service;

Whereas the University of Maryland School of Medicine is dedicated to providing excellence in biomedical education, basic and clinical research, quality patient care, and service to improve the health of the people of Maryland and the United States;

Whereas the University of Maryland School of Medicine is committed to the education and training of M.D. and Ph.D. students in fields including physical therapy, rehabilitation science, and medical research technology;

Whereas the University of Maryland School of Medicine has played a crucial role in helping to meet the health care needs of

the people of Maryland and continues to recruit and develop faculty to serve as exemplary role models for students; and

Whereas the University of Maryland School of Medicine has developed a legacy of academic excellence, outstanding patient care, and ground-breaking research: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of Maryland School of Medicine on its 200th anniversary; and

(2) recognizes the achievements of the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and the School of Medicine in providing outstanding service to, and in training leaders for, the local community, the State of Maryland, and the world.

SENATE RESOLUTION 672—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 12, 2008, AS “NATIONAL DAY OF ENCOURAGEMENT”

Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 672

Whereas negative images, stories, and influences in the day-to-day lives of Americans can detrimentally affect their emotional well-being, interactions with others, and general demeanor;

Whereas a group of teenagers participating in a leadership forum at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas, identified a lack of encouragement as one of the greatest problems facing young people today;

Whereas the youth of our Nation need guidance, inspiration, and reassurance to counteract this negativity and to develop the qualities of character essential for future leadership in our country;

Whereas a National Day of Encouragement would serve as a reminder to counterbalance and overcome negative influences, and would also provide much-needed encouragement and support to others;

Whereas, following the events of September 11, 2001, thousands of people of the United States made sacrifices in order to bring help and healing to the victims and their families, inspiring and encouraging the Nation; and

Whereas the renewed feelings of unity, hope, selflessness, and encouragement that began on September 12, 2001, are the same feelings that the National Day of Encouragement is meant to recapture and spread: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 12, 2008, as “National Day of Encouragement”;

(2) acknowledges the importance of encouragement and positive influences in the lives of all people; and

(3) urges the people of the United States to encourage others, whether it be through an act of service, a thoughtful letter, or words of kindness and inspiration, and to thereby boost the morale of all.

SENATE RESOLUTION 673—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKPLACE WELLNESS AS A STRATEGY TO HELP MAXIMIZE EMPLOYEES’ HEALTH AND WELL BEING

Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 673

Whereas comprehensive, culturally sensitive health promotion within the workplace is essential to maintain and improve the health of American workers;

Whereas employees who improve their health also reduce their probability of chronic health conditions, lower their out-of-pocket medical and pharmaceutical costs, reduce pain and suffering, have greater levels of energy and vitality, and experience increased satisfaction with their lives and jobs;

Whereas health care costs in the United States doubled from 1990 to 2001 and are expected to double again by 2012;

Whereas employee health benefits are the fastest growing labor cost component for employers, thus posing a serious and growing challenge to business in the United States;

Whereas business leaders are struggling to find strategies to help reduce the direct costs of employer-provided health care, as well as the indirect costs associated with higher rates of absenteeism, disability, and injury;

Whereas an effective strategy to address the primary driving force of soaring health care costs requires an investment in prevention;

Whereas some employers who invest in health promotion and disease prevention have achieved rates of return on investment ranging from \$3 to \$15 for each dollar invested, as well as a 28 percent average reduction in sick leave absenteeism, an average 26 percent reduction in health care costs, and a 30 percent average reduction in workers’ compensation and disability management claims costs;

Whereas the Healthy People 2010 national objectives for the United States include the workplace health-related goal that at least ¾ of United States employers, regardless of size, will voluntarily offer a comprehensive employee health promotion program that includes—(1) health education and programming which focuses on skill development and lifestyle behavior change along with information dissemination and awareness building, preferably tailored to employees’ interests and needs; (2) supportive social and physical environments, including an organization’s expectations regarding healthy behaviors, and implementation of policies that promote health and reduce risk of disease; (3) integration of the worksite wellness programs into the organization’s structure; (4) linkage to related programs like employee assistance programs (EAPs) and programs to help employees balance work and family; and (5) screening programs, ideally linked to medical care to ensure follow-up and appropriate treatment as necessary;

Whereas employers should be encouraged to invest in the health of employees by implementing comprehensive worksite health promotion programs that will help achieve our national Healthy People 2010 objectives;

Whereas business leaders that have made a healthy workforce a part of their core business strategy should be encouraged to share information and resources to educate their peers on the issue of employee health management through initiatives such as the Leading by Example CEO-to-CEO Roundtable on Workforce Health and the United States Workplace Wellness Alliance;

Whereas the employers that provide health care coverage for more than 177,000,000 Americans have the potential to exert transformative leadership on this issue by increasing the number, quality, and types of health promotion programs and policies at worksites across the Nation;

Whereas, for workplace wellness efforts to reach their full potential, chief executive officers of major corporations, company presidents of small enterprises, and State gov-

ernors should be encouraged to make workplace health promotion a priority; and

Whereas Congress supports the National Worksite Health Promotion goal as stated in Healthy People 2010 and encourages public employers to increase their awareness of the value of corporate investments in employee health management to help our Nation achieve this goal: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate calls on private and public employers to support workplace wellness and implement voluntarily worksite health promotion programs to help maximize employees’ health and well being and lower health care costs.

SENATE RESOLUTION 674—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 22, 2008, AS “NATIONAL FALLS PREVENTION AWARENESS DAY” TO RAISE AWARENESS AND ENCOURAGE THE PREVENTION OF FALLS AMONG OLDER ADULTS

Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BURR, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 674

Whereas older adults value their independence and a fall can significantly limit their ability to remain self-sufficient;

Whereas falls are the leading cause of death from unintentional injuries among older adults in the United States;

Whereas older adults are by far the population at greatest risk for falling unintentionally, with more than ¼ of all people 65 years or older falling each year;

Whereas older adults who fall once are 2 to 3 times more likely than adults who have not fallen to fall again;

Whereas, in 2000, the Bureau of the Census reported that more than 34,800,000 adults older than the age of 65 live in the United States, and that number is expected to grow to almost 55,000,000 by 2020;

Whereas 20 to 30 percent of older adults who fall suffer moderate to severe injuries, such as bruising, hip fractures, and head traumas;

Whereas, in 2005, falls resulted in nearly 1,800,000 older adults being treated in emergency departments and more than 433,000 older adults being hospitalized;

Whereas, in 2005, nearly 16,000 people aged 65 and older died from injuries related to unintentional falls;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that the mortality rate from falls among older adults increased 45 percent between 2000 and 2004;

Whereas the total in direct costs associated with both fatal and non-fatal falls is more than \$19,000,000,000 annually for hospitalization, emergency department visits, and outpatient care;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that if the rate of increase in falls is not stemmed, annual direct treatment costs will reach \$43,800,000,000 by 2020, with an annual cost under the Medicare program of \$32,400,000,000;

Whereas evidence-based programs show promise in reducing falls and facilitating cost-effective interventions, such as comprehensive clinical assessments, exercise programs to improve balance and health, management of medications, correction of vision, and reduction of home hazards;

Whereas, on April 23, 2008, the Safety of Seniors Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-202) was enacted, amending the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280b et seq.) to create a national education campaign aimed at older