

FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GREGG, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAUFMAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KOHL, Mr. KYL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEMIEUX, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SPECTER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. VITTER, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WEBB, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 354. A resolution commending Robert C. Byrd, Senator from West Virginia; considered and agreed to.

#### ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 46

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 46, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 148

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 148, a bill to restore the rule that agreements between manufacturers and retailers, distributors, or wholesalers to set the minimum price below which the manufacturer's product or service cannot be sold violates the Sherman Act.

S. 332

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 332, a bill to establish a comprehensive interagency response to reduce lung cancer mortality in a timely manner.

S. 424

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 424, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in the immigration laws by permitting permanent partners of United States citizens and lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships.

S. 448

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 448, a bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally

compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media.

S. 510

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 510, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to the safety of the food supply.

S. 583

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 583, a bill to provide grants and loan guarantees for the development and construction of science parks to promote the clustering of innovation through high technology activities.

S. 599

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 599, a bill to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to create a presumption that a disability or death of a Federal employee in fire protection activities caused by any certain diseases is the result of the performance of such employee's duty.

S. 727

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 727, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit certain conduct relating to the use of horses for human consumption.

S. 812

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 812, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions.

S. 825

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 825, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to restore, increase, and make permanent the exclusion from gross income for amounts received under qualified group legal services plans.

S. 850

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) were added as cosponsors of S. 850, a bill to amend the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to improve the conservation of sharks.

S. 857

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 857, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a \$1,000 refundable credit for individuals who are bona fide volunteer members of volunteer firefighting and emergency medical service organizations.

S. 994

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 994, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase awareness of the risks of breast cancer in young women and provide support for young women diagnosed with breast cancer.

S. 1055

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1055, a bill to grant the congressional gold medal, collectively, to the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, United States Army, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

S. 1067

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) were added as cosponsors of S. 1067, a bill to support stabilization and lasting peace in northern Uganda and areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army through development of a regional strategy to support multilateral efforts to successfully protect civilians and eliminate the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army and to authorize funds for humanitarian relief and reconstruction, reconciliation, and transitional justice, and for other purposes.

S. 1233

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1233, a bill to reauthorize and improve the SBIR and STTR programs and for other purposes.

S. 1313

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1313, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend and expand the charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory.

S. 1325

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1325, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend and modify the section 45 credit for refined coal from steel industry fuel, and for other purposes.

S. 1492

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1492, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to fund breakthroughs in Alzheimer's disease research while providing more help to caregivers and increasing public education about prevention.

S. 1524

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1524, a bill to strengthen the

capacity, transparency, and accountability of United States foreign assistance programs to effectively adapt and respond to new challenges of the 21st century, and for other purposes.

S. 1606

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1606, a bill to require foreign manufacturers of products imported into the United States to establish registered agents in the United States who are authorized to accept service of process against such manufacturers, and for other purposes.

S. 1681

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1681, a bill to ensure that health insurance issuers and medical malpractice insurance issuers cannot engage in price fixing, bid rigging, or market allocations to the detriment of competition and consumers.

S. 1709

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1709, a bill to amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to establish a grant program to promote efforts to develop, implement, and sustain veterinary services, and for other purposes.

S. 1789

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1789, a bill to restore fairness to Federal cocaine sentencing.

S. 1963

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1963, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide assistance to caregivers of veterans, to improve the provision of health care to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 2607

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2607, a bill to amend the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 to repeal a provision of that Act relating to geothermal energy receipts.

S. 2730

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2730, a bill to extend and enhance the COBRA subsidy program under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

S. 2747

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as co-

sponsors of S. 2747, a bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the land and water conservation fund to maximize the effectiveness of the fund for future generations, and for other purposes.

S. 2752

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2752, a bill to ensure the sale and consumption of raw oysters and to direct the Food and Drug Administration to conduct an education campaign regarding the risks associated with consuming raw oysters, and for other purposes.

S. 2787

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2787, a bill to repeal the authority of the Secretary of the Treasury to extend the Troubled Asset Relief Program.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2791. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to grant economy-related contract extensions of certain timber contracts between the Secretary of the Interior and timber purchasers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, today I am pleased to be joined by my colleagues Senators RON WYDEN, MAX BAUCUS, and JON TESTER, as I introduce the Forest Harvest Opportunity Act. This legislation will provide a very simple, yet critical, solution to a significant problem currently facing timber communities across the country.

As we all know, rural communities across the country have been hit particularly hard by our current economic recession. The unemployment rate for rural counties is far greater than the national average; it surpasses 20 percent in many of the rural communities in my own home state. As my colleagues have heard me mention on numerous occasions, many of our rural communities have been doubly hurt by the current economic recession because they depend on harvests from federally-owned forest land as a major component of their economies. These communities have already been struggling because timber harvests on our Federal land have been declining, but they are facing even worse situations today because the collapse of the housing market has caused a precipitous drop in timber prices.

For some of our forestry companies, this creates an even worse situation: the contracts they have to harvest timber on Federal land are now worthless. Many of these contracts were signed

with the Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management before the recession, when timber prices were still high. However, because of the decline in timber prices, harvesting today would cost forest companies more than the wood is worth and could cause ruinous problems for some of these companies.

The solution is simple common sense: allow companies to apply for additional time to harvest wood they have contracted for in times of unique economic circumstances. This simple change would allow these companies to delay the harvest until the price of timber had returned to a point that enabled the forest companies to earn a profit on the harvest. This change is not a novel idea. In fact, the Forest Service has rules in place allowing to do exactly that. Unfortunately, the Bureau of Land Management does not have similar rules in place. So, based simply on which agency a company has a contract with—and in Oregon Forest Service and BLM lands can be side-by-side—these companies may be forced to harvest timber at a loss or walk away from a contract they have won after a fair bidding process.

The Forest Harvest Opportunity Act provides a simple solution and allows these companies—and only companies who have contracts right now during the current recession—to petition for and receive an extension so they can harvest when timber prices return to a normal rate. This bill is a simple solution to address an important problem. Enacting this legislation would provide significant economic help for communities that are already among the hardest-hit by this economic downturn. I look forward to working with my colleagues for its passage.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2791

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

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Forest Harvest Opportunity Act”.

#### SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **ECONOMY-RELATED CONTRACT EXTENSION.**—The term “economy-related contract extension” means the addition of 3 years to the expiration date of a qualifying contract for the right to cut and remove timber.

(2) **QUALIFYING CONTRACT.**—The term “qualifying contract” means a contract, executed on or before December 31, 2008, for the sale of timber from land administered by the Bureau of Land Management—

(A) for which there is unharvested volume remaining;

(B) for which, not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the timber purchaser makes a written request to the Secretary for an economy-related contract extension; and