

Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 11, 2009, at 2:30 p.m.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Tom Edwards, a Secret Service fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges during the consideration of the nomination of Mr. William J. Lynn, III, to be the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

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

HONORING MIAMI UNIVERSITY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 35, which was submitted earlier today.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 35) honoring Miami University for its 200 years of commitment to public higher education.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 35) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 35

Whereas article III of the Northwest Ordinance, enacted by the Second Continental Congress in 1787, states that: “Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.”;

Whereas Miami University was chartered on February 17, 1809;

Whereas Miami University is the Nation's tenth oldest public institution of higher learning;

Whereas Miami University's motto is “Prodesse Quam Conspicere”, meaning, “to accomplish without being conspicuous”;

Whereas, former Poet Laureate Robert Frost once referred to Miami University as “the most beautiful college there is”;

Whereas Miami University is the birthplace of the “McGuffey Eclectic Readers”, written by William Holmes McGuffey, who was known as “School Master to the Nation” and who wrote and compiled the first 4 such readers while a Miami University faculty member;

Whereas Miami University is cited annually by national college rankings as being one of the Nation's best values among public universities;

Whereas Miami University is a university committed to empowering its students, faculty, and staff to become engaged citizens

who use their knowledge and skills with integrity and compassion to improve the future of our global society;

Whereas Miami University has continued to fulfill its mission by attracting some of the Nation's brightest faculty, staff, and students;

Whereas Miami University consistently ranks among the top 25 colleges and universities in the Nation for the number of undergraduate students who study abroad;

Whereas Miami University has a graduation rate that exceeds the national averages for undergraduates, students of color, and athletes;

Whereas Miami University is known as the “Mother of Fraternities”, as it is the Alpha Chapter for 5 National Greek organizations: Beta Theta Pi, Sigma Chi, Phi Delta Theta, Phi Kappa Tau, and Delta Zeta;

Whereas Miami University has more than 150,000 living alumni who reside in every State in the Nation and numerous countries throughout the world, where they contribute significantly to their local and global communities;

Whereas Miami University ranks forty-fourth among all schools for producing Peace Corps volunteers since the inception of the Peace Corps and is ranked seventh on the Peace Corps' 2009 list of the top 25 volunteer-producing, medium-sized schools in the Nation, with 39 alumni currently serving as volunteers and a total of 809 Miami alumni having served as volunteers since the inception of the Peace Corps in 1961;

Whereas Miami University alumni have a history of service to the United States and include a President of the United States, the Honorable Benjamin Harrison; 9 United States Senators, including one sitting Senator, the Honorable Maria Cantwell of Washington; 31 United States Representatives, including two sitting Members, the Honorable Paul Ryan of Wisconsin and the Honorable Steve Driehaus of Ohio, and a former Speaker of the House; the parents of a First Lady; the grandparents of a President; 6 Governors; 11 United States Generals; 6 United States Ministers to foreign governments; and 1 United States Ambassador;

Whereas Miami University's alumni include 27 college presidents;

Whereas Miami University has enriched our Nation in the arts, humanities, and sciences through students and alumni who have reached the pinnacle of their professions, such as a United States Poet Laureate, Pulitzer Prize winners, a National Teacher of the Year, National Institutes of Health Fellows, National Science Foundation award recipients, National Endowment of the Arts awardees, and renowned journalists;

Whereas Miami University is known as the “Cradle of Coaches” for the unparalleled number of nationally prominent collegiate and professional coaches it has produced, 18 of whom have been recognized as national coaches of the year, including Paul Brown (Cleveland Browns), Walter “Smokey” Alston (Brooklyn/Los Angeles Dodgers), Woody Hayes (Ohio State University), Bo Schembechler (University of Michigan), and Vicki Korn (Miami University);

Whereas Miami University has created a “Culture of Champions”, an environment that teaches student athletes to excel in their chosen endeavors, and which led students to earn distinctions that include a National Football League Rookie of the Year, National Football League Super Bowl Champions, National Basketball Association World Champions, National Hockey League Stanley Cup Champions, Major League Baseball World Series Champions, and Olympic gold medalists;

Whereas Miami University has contributed to the economic growth of the United States

through the education of men and women who have gone on to lead some of our most august corporations such as AT&T, Proctor & Gamble, the J.M. Smucker Company, and United Parcel Service of America; and

Whereas Miami University is the largest employer in Butler County, Ohio, with an economic impact of over \$1,000,000,000 per year to the State of Ohio: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates Miami University on the momentous occasion of the university's 200th anniversary;

(2) expresses its best wishes for Miami University's continued success; and

(3) requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an official copy of this resolution to Miami University for appropriate display.

PROVIDING FOR A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 41 at the desk and just received from the House.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 41) providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, without intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 41) was agreed to.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, February 12, for the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each; further, that the Senate recess from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, at 11:30 a.m., there will be a ceremony honoring the 200th anniversary of the birth

of President Abraham Lincoln in the Capitol Rotunda. All Members are encouraged to attend.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator MURRAY.

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I recently received a letter from a woman in Sultan, WA, that I want to share with you today as we work to finalize the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. She wrote to me because her family is going through some very hard times and she doesn't know where else to turn.

Her husband, who is a veteran who received a Purple Heart, lost his job in October. Her own wages have been cut and her daughter and her 3-year-old granddaughter had to move in with them because they can't afford rent and childcare. At the end of this month, they are going to lose their home to foreclosure.

She said her family is living "both literally and figuratively on the edge." As she put it:

We are the textbook middle class . . . sliding into a jobless, homeless, and hopeless future.

Mr. President, I come this afternoon to share her story with you because the pain she is going through is being felt by millions of Americans who have lost their jobs and their homes in the last couple of years. Families such as hers feel as though their lives are slipping out from under them, and they are looking to us for help.

The House and the Senate have taken a critical step forward by passing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It is going to give our economy the jolt it needs to create jobs and help our country get back on track. But we are not done yet. We still need to get that bill to the President. Every day we wait, the economy gets worse. Every day, more jobs are cut, more small businesses close their doors, more homes are lost, and more families are forced to make new sacrifices just to make ends meet. That is why I have come to the floor this evening.

The American people need action now. They need us to set aside our differences and put a final bill into President Obama's hands so we can start the real work of getting our country moving again. So I urge my colleagues in the House and the Senate to finish this job and give this bill final approval.

We know the bill that is coming out of conference is not perfect, but it makes tried-and-true investments that will help create jobs and get our country back on track. It makes a down-payment on the future by rebuilding our roads and bridges, our water and sewer plants—investments that will put people to work today and strengthen our economy for years to come.

The bill expands our renewable energy options, creating good-paying jobs in a growing industry and helping to end our addiction to oil. It will also help improve health care and cut costs by computerizing health records and boosting research. It invests in education and job training that will help our laid-off workers learn new skills and find new jobs.

Mr. President, our economy is not going to recover overnight. We still have very hard times ahead. But I am confident this is the urgent action we need to begin moving forward again. I want to take a few minutes this evening to talk about what it will mean for families in my home State of Washington.

To begin with, this bill offers a helping hand to thousands of families in Washington State who are struggling to meet their basic needs. In the last couple of months, we have seen a demand for food stamps, Medicaid, and other programs rise dramatically. Food stamp applications are up 15 percent over last year. State workers have said they are having trouble keeping up with the demand. This bill is going to help us meet the needs of the most vulnerable families by extending unemployment insurance benefits, expanding food stamps, and increasing funding to help with Medicaid costs.

This isn't just the moral thing to do, we would not be able to dig ourselves out of this economic crisis until people have money to spend. So this is the right decision economically as well. The money we spend on unemployment and food stamps will go right back into the economy as people use the benefits to pay for things they need. That is the same reason we are working to get money into the hands of working families and small business owners.

Like families all across the country, people in my home State are scared, they are struggling to make ends meet, and they aren't spending. So we include in this bill an income tax cut that will give almost 2½ million Washington workers some extra money in their paychecks every week. Because this bill is about stabilizing our economy and getting our country back on track, we are also including funding to help struggling families pay for critical expenses, such as childcare or health care or college tuition.

I was a working mom. I know that reliable childcare is what makes it possible for millions of parents to go to work every day. This bill increases the childcare development block grant so more parents can afford quality daycare for their kids. It increases Pell grants and higher education tax credits to help thousands of our students stay in college, get their degree, and then qualify for a good-paying job. Importantly, the bill also makes COBRA more affordable so people who have lost their jobs can keep their health insurance while they look for work.

So we are helping working families pay for their basic expenses, stay in school, and keep their jobs and their health care. That is critical to getting our country back on track.

But the biggest jolt to our economy will come from the millions of jobs we are creating in construction, in environmental cleanup, and in energy development. In my State, this bill will help put thousands of people to work fixing our roads and bridges and upgrading our mass transit and ferry systems. These are investments that will also make our communities stronger and more attractive to businesses in the long run. It will help us take a big step toward energy independence and lower energy costs for everyone.

This bill expands the Bonneville Power Administration's existing borrowing authority, and it will help us take advantage of more renewable energy sources and hire hundreds of thousands of new employees who will be trained to update our energy transmission systems. That will allow the new energy we hope to produce, such as wind, get to our homes and our businesses and save all of us money in the future.

This bill will also help create and preserve jobs at Hanford, and it will keep our legal and moral commitment to cleaning up nuclear waste in Washington State and across the country. It will also ensure that we can fulfill our responsibility to our Nation's veterans by making investments in badly needed construction and repair projects at our VA hospitals and medical facilities in Washington State and across the country.

But we are not just creating construction jobs in this bill. We are helping our local and State governments keep critical employees on the job—our police and our firefighters, our teachers, our university employees. This economic crisis has hit State and local governments terribly hard. They have had to make cuts across the board, including in education and emergency response. Local officials have told me they are very worried about what that will mean for their communities. Police chiefs and sheriffs have been warning me that I.D. theft, burglary, bank robbery, fraud, and gang activity are going to increase as jobs vanish and people become more desperate.

In this bill we provide money for Byrne and COPS grants to help keep