

Government communication that the public can understand and use.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **AGENCY.**—The term “agency” means an Executive agency, as defined under section 105 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) **COVERED DOCUMENT.**—The term “covered document” means any document (other than a regulation) issued by an agency to the public, including documents and other text released in electronic form.

(3) **PLAIN WRITING.**—The term “plain writing” means writing that the intended audience can readily understand and use because that writing is clear, concise, well-organized, and follows other best practices of plain writing.

SEC. 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) **REQUIREMENT TO USE PLAIN WRITING IN NEW DOCUMENTS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, each agency shall use plain writing in every covered document of the agency issued or substantially revised.

(b) **GUIDANCE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—

(A) **DEVELOPMENT.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Office of Management and Budget shall develop guidance on implementing the requirements of subsection (a).

(B) **ISSUANCE.**—The Office of Management and Budget shall issue the guidance developed under subparagraph (A) to agencies as a circular.

(2) **INTERIM GUIDANCE.**—Before the issuance of guidance under paragraph (1), agencies may follow the guidance of—

(A) the writing guidelines developed by the Plain Language Action and Information Network; or

(B) guidance provided by the head of the agency that is consistent with the guidelines referred to under subparagraph (A).

SEC. 5. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(a) **INITIAL REPORT.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the head of each agency shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report that describes how the agency intends to meet the following objectives:

(1) Communicating the requirements of this Act to agency employees.

(2) Training agency employees in plain writing.

(3) Meeting the requirement under section 4(a).

(4) Ensuring ongoing compliance with the requirements of this Act.

(5) Designating a senior official to be responsible for implementing the requirements of this Act.

(b) **ANNUAL AND OTHER REPORTS.**—

(1) **AGENCY REPORTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The head of each agency shall submit reports on compliance with this Act to the Office of Management and Budget.

(B) **SUBMISSION DATES.**—The Office of Management and Budget shall notify each agency of the date each report under subparagraph (A) is required for submission to enable the Office of Management and Budget to meet the requirements of paragraph (2).

(2) **REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**—The Office of Management and Budget shall review agency reports submitted under paragraph (1) using the guidance issued under section 4(b)(1)(B) and submit a report on the progress of agencies to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives—

(A) annually for the first 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act; and
(B) once every 3 years thereafter.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. BAUCUS. 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 Wednesday, March 11, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Violent Islamist Extremism: al-Shabaab Recruitment in America.”

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

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2009, at 10 a.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, to conduct a hearing entitled “S.J. Res. 7 and H.J. Res. 21: A Constitutional Amendment Concerning Senate Vacancies” on Wednesday, March 11, 2009, at 10 a.m., in room SH-216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

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

EXTENSION OF CERTAIN IMMIGRATION PROGRAMS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1127, which was received from the House.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1127) to extend certain immigration programs.

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times and passed; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 1127) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CONGRATULATING LITHUANIA ON ITS 1000TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign

Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 70, and that the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 70) congratulating the people of the Republic of Lithuania on the 1000th anniversary of Lithuania and celebrating the rich history of Lithuania.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize an important moment for the people of Lithuania. Last month, Lithuania celebrated its 1000 year anniversary.

Along with my distinguished colleagues, Senator VOINOVICH from Ohio and Senator FEINSTEIN from California, I have submitted a commemorative resolution for this occasion.

As the birthplace of my mother, who came to the United States from Lithuania with her parents when she was just 2 years old, Lithuania holds a special place in my heart.

One thousand years sounds like a long time, especially in our relatively young United States. But historians have noted that the name of the area now known as Lithuania first appeared in European records, in the German Annals of Quedlinburg.

Traditions of Lithuanian statehood date back to the early Middle Ages, when Duke Mindaugas united an assortment of Baltic Tribes to defend themselves from attacks by the Teutonic Knights. From these early roots, Lithuania grew to encompass territory stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea by the end of the 14th century.

This nation, which once was the largest in Europe, has seen extraordinary struggles during the last century. It suffered 50 years of occupation, by both Nazi and Soviet forces.

Throughout that time, the U.S. Congress stood in support of Lithuania and its Baltic neighbors, Estonia and Latvia, and refused to recognize the Soviet occupation. In 2007, the United States and Lithuania celebrated 85 years of continuous diplomatic relations.

Today, Lithuania is a thriving free-market democracy and a strong ally of the United States. As a member of the European Union and NATO, Lithuania contributes to peace and security in Europe. Lithuania also contributes to global stability and peace building through its contributions to missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo and Georgia.

When I traveled to Lithuania a few years ago and visited the village of my mother and grandparents, I was welcomed warmly by President Adamkus, who I have known for many years, and the people of Lithuania. I was so proud, not only to see my family's roots, but to see how far Lithuania has come, despite the many difficulties it endured in the last century.

I congratulate President Adamkus, Foreign Minister Usackas, and the people of Lithuania on this historic occasion.

Mr. CARDIN. 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 any statements related to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 70) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 70

Whereas the name "Lithuania" first appeared in European records in the year 1009, when it was mentioned in the German manuscript "Annals of Quedlinburg";

Whereas Duke Mindaugas united various Baltic tribes and established the state of Lithuania during the period between 1236 and 1263;

Whereas, by the end of the 14th century, Lithuania was the largest country in Europe, encompassing territory from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea;

Whereas Vilnius University was founded in 1579 and remained the easternmost university in Europe for 200 years;

Whereas the February 16, 1918 Act of Independence of Lithuania led to the establishment of Lithuania as a sovereign and democratic state;

Whereas, under the cover of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, on June 17, 1940, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union in violation of pre-existing peace treaties;

Whereas, during 50 years of Soviet occupation of the Baltic states, Congress strongly, consistently, and on a bipartisan basis refused to legally recognize the incorporation of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania by the Soviet Union;

Whereas, on March 11, 1990, the Republic of Lithuania was restored and Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to declare independence;

Whereas on September 2, 1991, the United States Government formally recognized Lithuania as an independent and sovereign nation;

Whereas Lithuania has successfully developed into a free and democratic country, with a free market economy and respect for the rule of law;

Whereas Lithuania is a full and responsible member of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

Whereas in 2007, the United States Government and the Government of Lithuania celebrated 85 years of continuous diplomatic relations;

Whereas the United States Government welcomes and appreciates efforts by the Government of Lithuania to maintain international peace and stability in Europe and around the world by contributing to international civilian and military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Georgia; and

Whereas Lithuania is a strong and loyal ally of the United States, and the people of Lithuania share common values with the people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the people of the Republic of Lithuania on the occasion of the 1000th anniversary of Lithuania;

(2) commends the Government of Lithuania for its success in implementing political and economic reforms, for establishing political, religious, and economic freedom, and for its commitment to human rights; and

(3) recognizes the close and enduring relationship between the United States Government and the Government of Lithuania.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 570

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 570) to stimulate the economy, create jobs at no cost to the taxpayers, and without borrowing money from foreign governments for which our children and grandchildren will be responsible, and for other purposes.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar, under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to Public Law 100-696, appoints the Senator from Alaska, Ms. MURKOWSKI, as a member of the United States Capitol Preservation Commission.

The Chair announces, on behalf of the Republican leader, pursuant to Public Law 101-509, the appointment of Terry Birdwhistell, of Kentucky, to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2009

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 11 a.m., Thursday, March 12; 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 that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business until 12 noon, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each; further, that following morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session under the previous order.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, under the previous order, the Senate will vote at 2 p.m. on the confirmation of the nomination of David Ogden to be the Deputy Attorney General. Tomorrow the Senate will also consider the nomination of Thomas Perrelli to be Associate Attorney General. That vote is expected to occur tomorrow afternoon.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent the Senate adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:56 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 12, 2009, at 11 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

JONATHAN Z. CANNON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, VICE MARCUS C. PEACOCK, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RICHARD RAHUL VERMA, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS), VICE MATTHEW A. REYNOLDS, RESIGNED.

ESTHER BRIMMER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS), VICE BRIAN H. HOOK, RESIGNED.

PHILIP H. GORDON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS), VICE DANIEL FRIED, RESIGNED.

IVO H. DAALDER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE ON THE COUNCIL OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY.

KARL WINFRID EKENBERRY, OF FLORIDA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN.

CHRISTOPHER R. HILL, OF RHODE ISLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ.

MELANNE VERVEER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR WOMEN'S GLOBAL ISSUES.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

IVAN K. FONG, OF OHIO, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE PHILIP J. PERRY, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

W. SCOTT GOULD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, VICE GORDON H. MANSFIELD, RESIGNED.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL W. BROADWAY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) SEAN F. CREAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) PATRICK E. MCGRATH
REAR ADM. (LH) JOHN G. MESSERSCHMIDT
REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL M. SHATYNSKI