

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. CHAMBLISS):

S. 636. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to conform the definition of renewable biomass to the definition given the term in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 637. A bill to authorize the construction of the Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority System in the State of Montana and a portion of McKenzie County, North Dakota, for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. Res. 76. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States and the People's Republic of China should work together to reduce or eliminate tariff and nontariff barriers to trade in clean energy and environmental goods and services; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. VOINOVICH):

S. Res. 77. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States and the People's Republic of China should negotiate a bilateral agreement on clean energy cooperation; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. Res. 78. A resolution designating March 22, 2009, as "National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 21

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 21, a bill to reduce unintended pregnancy, reduce abortions, and improve access to women's health care.

S. 144

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG) were added as cosponsors of S. 144, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove cell phones from listed property under section 280F.

S. 180

At the request of Mr. BENNET, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 180, a bill to establish the Cache La Poudre River National Heritage Area, and for other purposes.

S. 183

At the request of Mr. BENNET, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 183, a bill to establish the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area and the Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Area.

S. 184

At the request of Mr. BENNET, his name was added as a cosponsor of S.

184, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to carry out the Jackson Gulch rehabilitation project in the State of Colorado.

S. 185

At the request of Mr. BENNET, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 185, a bill to establish the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes.

S. 186

At the request of Mr. BENNET, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 186, a bill to establish the South Park National Heritage Area in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes.

S. 187

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 187, a bill to provide for the construction of the Arkansas Valley Conduit in the State of Colorado.

S. 188

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 188, a bill to provide for a study of options for protecting the open space characteristics of certain lands in and adjacent to the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests in Colorado, and for other purposes.

S. 189

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 189, a bill to amend the National Trails System Act to clarify Federal authority relating to land acquisition from willing sellers for the majority of the trails in the System, and for other purposes.

S. 190

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 190, a bill to designate as wilderness certain land within the Rocky Mountain National Park and to adjust the boundaries of the Indian Peaks Wilderness and the Arapaho National Recreation Area of the Arapaho National Forest in the State of Colorado.

S. 191

At the request of Mr. BENNET, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 191, a bill to amend the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Act of 2000 to explain the purpose and provide for the administration of the Baca National Wildlife Refuge.

S. 243

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 243, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the Secretary of the Treasury to establish the standard mileage rate for use of a passenger automobile for purposes of the charitable contributions deduction and to exclude charitable mileage reimbursements for gross income.

S. 277

At the request of Mr. REED, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 277, a bill to amend the National and Community Service Act of 1990 to expand and improve opportunities for service, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. CASEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 277, *supra*.

At the request of Mr. BYRD, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 277, *supra*.

S. 407

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 407, a bill to increase, effective as of December 1, 2009, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 423

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 423, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize advance appropriations for certain medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs by providing two-fiscal year budget authority, and for other purposes.

S. 462

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 462, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to prohibit the importation, exportation, transportation, and sale, receipt, acquisition, or purchase in interstate or foreign commerce, of any live animal of any prohibited wildlife species, and for other purposes.

S. 475

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) were added as cosponsors of S. 475, a bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to guarantee the equity of spouses of military personnel with regard to matters of residency, and for other purposes.

S. 484

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 484, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 491

At the request of Mr. WEBB, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 491, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Federal civilian and military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pretax basis and to allow a deduction for TRICARE supplemental premiums.

S. 506

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 506, a bill to restrict the use of offshore tax havens and abusive tax shelters to inappropriately avoid Federal taxation, and for other purposes.

S. 511

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 511, a bill to amend part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an exemption of pharmacies and pharmacists from certain Medicare accreditation requirements in the same manner as such exemption applies to certain professionals.

S. 527

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 527, a bill to amend the Clean Air act to prohibit the issuance of permits under title V of that Act for certain emissions from agricultural production.

S. 528

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) were added as cosponsors of S. 528, a bill to prevent voter caging.

S. 535

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 535, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 542

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 542, a bill to repeal the provision of law that provides automatic pay adjustments for Members of Congress.

S. 546

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 546, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation.

S. 572

At the request of Mr. WEBB, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 572, a bill to provide for the issuance of a "forever stamp" to honor the sacrifices of the brave men and women of

the armed forces who have been awarded the Purple Heart.

S. 599

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) 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. 611

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 611, a bill to provide for the reduction of adolescent pregnancy, HIV rates, and other sexually transmitted diseases, and for other purposes.

S. 620

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 620, a bill to repeal the provision of law that provides automatic pay adjustments for Members of Congress.

S. RES. 49

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 49, a resolution to express the sense of the Senate regarding the importance of public diplomacy.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KOHL:

S. 627. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to support early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, today I am doing my part to end the growing crisis of high school dropouts. I am introducing the Fast Track to College Act, a bill to increase high school graduation rates and improve access to college through the expansion of dual enrollment programs and Early College High Schools. Such programs allow young people to earn up to two years of college credit, including an Associate's degree, while also earning their high school diploma.

As our country struggles with an economic recession, I believe we must continue to invest in our public schools. While we must carefully consider how taxpayer dollars are spent during these trying times, education is one of the wisest investments we can make, and it is an investment that must be made now, before our children fall farther behind.

Education provides an outstanding return on investment for taxpayers, and it builds the foundation for future economic growth. Young people who drop out of high school are at increased

risk for unemployment and incarceration, and they are more likely to depend on public assistance for healthcare, housing, and other basic needs. Conversely, adults with a bachelor's degree will earn two-thirds more than a high school graduate over the course of their working lives, and they are much less likely to experience unemployment or rely on social programs.

Our Nation's future depends on how we respond to the growing crisis in our schools, especially the rising number of high school dropouts. This generation of Americans is the first in history to be less likely to graduate from high school than their parents, and the U.S. is the only industrialized Nation where that is the case. This is not a sustainable trend if we hope to remain powerful and prosperous. Recent reports have illustrated the enormous challenge: the national graduation rate is only 70 percent, and is significantly lower in many large urban school districts. For example, my home state of Wisconsin has a relatively high graduation rate of 86 percent, but that rate drops to only 46 percent in the urban schools in Milwaukee. Such an achievement gap cannot continue.

As we work to reauthorize the No Child Left Behind Act, we must find solutions to the growing dropout crisis and provide opportunities for young people to pursue higher education. More funding is not the only answer for the problems in our schools—we must also reform our whole approach to education. We must ensure that young people are being equipped with the skills they need to compete in a 21st century economy. In particular, we can no longer view a high school diploma as a satisfactory goal for students. In today's world, students need at least two years of college or technical education in order to secure a well-paying job and provide for themselves and their families.

That is why I ask my colleagues to support this bill, which provides competitive grant funding for Early College High Schools and other dual enrollment programs that allow low-income students to earn college credit and a high school diploma at the same time. These programs put students on the fast track to college and increase the odds that they will not only graduate, but go on to continue their education and secure higher-paying jobs. The Gates Foundation has been funding evaluations of such programs for several years now, and they have shown incredible promise as a tool for increasing attendance, graduation, and college enrollment rates, particularly among low-income high school students. Students are motivated by a challenging curriculum and the tangible rewards of achievement, including free college credit and exposure to career opportunities. This free college credit is critically important, especially in this economy, as family savings dwindle and tuition costs continue