

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

to rise. Dual enrollment programs can provide just enough costs savings to make college affordable, especially for low and middle-income families who might think it is out of their reach.

Specifically, this bill authorizes \$140,000,000 for competitive 6-year grants to schools, with priority given to schools that serve low-income students. The funding will help defray the costs of implementing new programs, strengthening existing programs, and providing students and teachers with the resources they need to succeed in early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs. The bill also includes \$10 million for states to provide support for these programs, as well as an evaluation component so we can measure the program's effectiveness.

I am proud to sponsor this legislation because I believe this investment in our schools will help solve the dropout crisis and secure America's future by ensuring that all young people can compete in today's global economy. Further, I believe that all children, regardless of income or other factors, deserve equal opportunities to fulfill their potential, and it is both morally and fiscally responsible for this Congress to invest in high-quality educational programs that help them reach that potential.

While our country faces unprecedented challenges at this moment in history, I believe we also face incredible opportunities to shape our future. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Congress to reinvest in a world-class education system that will move our country forward into the 21st century.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

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. 627

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 "Fast Track to College Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to increase high school graduation rates and the percentage of students who complete a recognized postsecondary credential by the age of 26, including among low-income students and students from other populations underrepresented in higher education.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this Act:

(1) **DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM.**—The term "dual enrollment program" means an academic program through which a high school student is able simultaneously to earn credit toward a high school diploma and a postsecondary degree or certificate.

(2) **EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL.**—The term "early college high school" means a high school that provides a course of study that enables a student to earn a high school diploma and either an associate's degree or one

to two years of college credit toward a postsecondary degree or credential.

(3) **EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY.**—The term "educational service agency" has the meaning given such term in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(4) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—The term "eligible entity" means a local educational agency, which may be an educational service agency, in a collaborative partnership with an institution of higher education. Such partnership also may include other entities, such as a nonprofit organization with experience in youth development.

(5) **INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**—The term "institution of higher education" has the meaning given such term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

(6) **LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.**—The term "local educational agency" has the meaning given such term in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(7) **SECRETARY.**—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Education.

(8) **LOW-INCOME STUDENT.**—The term "low-income student" means a student described in section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6313(a)(5)).

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; RESERVATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—To carry out this Act, there are authorized to be appropriated \$150,000,000 for fiscal year 2010 and such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2015.

(b) **EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOLS.**—The Secretary shall reserve not less than 45 percent of the funds appropriated under subsection (a) to support early college high schools under section 5.

(c) **OTHER DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS.**—The Secretary shall reserve not less than 45 percent of such funds to support other dual enrollment programs under section 5.

(d) **STATE GRANTS.**—The Secretary shall reserve 10 percent of such funds, or \$10,000,000, whichever is less, for grants to States under section 9.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZED PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary is authorized to award six-year grants to eligible entities seeking to establish a new, or support an existing, early college high school or other dual enrollment program.

(b) **GRANT AMOUNT.**—The Secretary shall ensure that grants are of sufficient size to enable grantees to carry out all required activities and otherwise meet the purposes of this Act, except that a grant under this section may not exceed \$2,000,000.

(c) **MATCHING REQUIREMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible entity shall contribute matching funds toward the costs of the early college high school or other dual enrollment program to be supported under this section, of which not less than half shall be from non-Federal sources, which funds shall represent not less than the following:

(A) 20 percent of the grant amount received in each of the first and second years of the grant.

(B) 30 percent in each of the third and fourth years.

(C) 40 percent in the fifth year.

(D) 50 percent in the sixth year.

(2) **DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED.**—The Secretary shall allow an eligible entity to satisfy the requirement of this subsection through in-kind contributions.

(d) **SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.**—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section only to supplement funds that would, in the absence of such grant, be made available from non-Federal funds for support

of the activities described in the eligible entity's application under section 7, and not to supplant such funds.

(e) **PRIORITY.**—In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to applicants—

(1) that propose to establish or support an early college high school or other dual enrollment program that will serve a student population of which 40 percent or more are students counted under section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6313(a)(5)); and

(2) from States that provide assistance to early college high schools or other dual enrollment programs, such as assistance to defray the costs of higher education, such as tuition, fees, and textbooks.

(f) **GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.**—The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, ensure that grantees are from a representative cross-section of urban, suburban, and rural areas.

SEC. 6. USES OF FUNDS.

(a) **MANDATORY ACTIVITIES.**—An eligible entity shall use grant funds received under section 5 to support the activities described in its application under section 7, including the following:

(1) **PLANNING YEAR.**—In the case of a new early college high school or other dual enrollment program, during the first year of the grant—

(A) hiring a principal and staff, as appropriate;

(B) designing the curriculum and sequence of courses in collaboration with, at a minimum, teachers from the local educational agency and faculty from the partner institution of higher education;

(C) informing parents and the community about the school or program and opportunities to become actively involved in the school or program;

(D) establishing a course articulation process for defining and approving courses for high school and college credit;

(E) outreach programs to ensure that middle and high school students and their families are aware of the school or program;

(F) liaison activities among partners in the eligible entity; and

(G) coordinating secondary and postsecondary support services, academic calendars, and transportation.

(2) **IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD.**—During the remainder of the grant period—

(A) academic and social support services, including counseling;

(B) liaison activities among partners in the eligible entity;

(C) data collection and use of such data for student and instructional improvement and program evaluation;

(D) outreach programs to ensure that middle and high school students and their families are aware of the early college high school or other dual enrollment program;

(E) professional development, including joint professional development for secondary school personnel and faculty from the institution of higher education; and

(F) school or program design and planning team activities, including curriculum development.

(b) **ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES.**—An eligible entity may also use grant funds received under section 5 otherwise to support the activities described in its application under section 7, including—

(1) purchasing textbooks and equipment that support the curriculum of the early college high school or other dual enrollment program;

(2) developing learning opportunities for students that complement classroom experiences, such as internships, career-based capstone projects, and opportunities to participate in the activities provided under chapters 1 and 2 of subpart 2 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11 et seq., 1070a–21 et seq.);

(3) transportation; and

(4) planning time for high school and college educators to collaborate.

SEC. 7. APPLICATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To receive a grant under section 5, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and including such information as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(b) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—At a minimum, the application described in subsection (a) shall include a description of—

(1) the budget of the early college high school or other dual enrollment program;

(2) each partner in the eligible entity and its experience with early college high schools or other dual enrollment programs, key personnel from each partner and such personnel's responsibilities for the school or program, and how the eligible entity will work with secondary and postsecondary teachers, other public and private entities, community-based organizations, businesses, labor organizations, and parents to ensure that students will be prepared to succeed in postsecondary education and employment, which may include the development of an advisory board;

(3) how the eligible entity will target and recruit at-risk youth, including those at risk of dropping out of school, first generation college students, and students from populations described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(2)(C)(v)(II));

(4) a system of student supports, including small group activities, tutoring, literacy and numeracy skill development in all academic disciplines, parental and community outreach and engagement, extended learning time, and college readiness activities, such as early college academic seminars and counseling;

(5) in the case of an early college high school, how a graduation and career plan will be developed, consistent with State graduation requirements, for each student and reviewed each semester;

(6) how parents or guardians of students participating in the early college high school or other dual enrollment program will be informed of the students' academic performance and progress and, subject to paragraph (5), involved in the development of the students' career and graduation plans;

(7) coordination between the institution of higher education and the local educational agency, including regarding academic calendars, provision of student services, curriculum development, and professional development;

(8) how the eligible entity will ensure that teachers in the early college high school or other dual enrollment program receive appropriate professional development and other supports, including to enable the teachers to utilize effective parent and community engagement strategies, and help English-language learners, students with disabilities, and students from diverse cultural backgrounds to succeed;

(9) learning opportunities for students that complement classroom experiences, such as internships, career-based capstone projects, and opportunities to participate in the activities provided under chapters 1 and 2 of subpart 2 of part A of title IV of the Higher

Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11 et seq., 1070a–21 et seq.);

(10) how policies, agreements, and the courses in the program will ensure that postsecondary credits earned will be transferable to, at a minimum, public institutions of higher education within the State, consistent with existing statewide articulation agreements;

(11) student assessments and other measurements of student achievement, including benchmarks for student achievement;

(12) outreach programs to provide elementary and secondary school students, especially those in middle grades, and their parents, teachers, school counselors, and principals information about and academic preparation for the early college high school or other dual enrollment program;

(13) how the local educational agency and institution of higher education will work together, as appropriate, to collect and use data for student and instructional improvement and program evaluation;

(14) how the eligible entity will help students meet eligibility criteria for postsecondary courses and ensure that students understand how their credits will transfer; and

(15) how the eligible entity will access and leverage additional resources necessary to sustain the early college high school or other dual enrollment program after the grant expires, including by engaging businesses and non-profit organizations.

(c) ASSURANCES.—An eligible entity's application under subsection (a) shall include assurances that—

(1) in the case of an early college high school, the majority of courses offered, including of postsecondary courses, will be offered at facilities of the institution of higher education;

(2) students will not be required to pay tuition or fees for postsecondary courses offered as part of the early college high school or other dual enrollment program;

(3) postsecondary credits earned will be transcribed upon completion of the requisite coursework; and

(4) faculty teaching such postsecondary courses meet the normal standards for faculty established by the institution of higher education.

(d) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the requirement of subsection (c)(1) upon a showing that it is impractical to apply due to geographic considerations.

SEC. 8. PEER REVIEW.

(a) PEER REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary shall establish peer review panels to review applications submitted pursuant to section 7 to advise the Secretary regarding such applications.

(b) COMPOSITION OF PEER REVIEW PANELS.—The Secretary shall ensure that each peer review panel is not comprised wholly of full-time officers or employees of the Federal Government and includes, at a minimum—

(1) experts in the establishment and administration of early college high schools or other dual enrollment programs from the secondary and postsecondary perspective;

(2) faculty at institutions of higher education and secondary school teachers with expertise in dual enrollment; and

(3) experts in the education of at-risk students.

SEC. 9. GRANTS TO STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to award five-year grants to State agencies responsible for secondary or postsecondary education for efforts to support or establish early college high schools or other dual enrollment programs.

(b) GRANT AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall ensure that grants are of sufficient size to enable grantees to carry out all required activities.

(c) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—A State shall contribute matching funds from non-Federal sources toward the costs of carrying out activities under this section, which funds shall represent not less than 50 percent of the grant amount received in each year of the grant.

(d) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to States that provide assistance to early college high schools or other dual enrollment programs, such as assistance to defray the costs of higher education, such as tuition, fees, and textbooks.

(e) APPLICATION.—To receive a grant under this section, a State agency shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and including such information as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(f) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—At a minimum, the application described in subsection (e) shall include—

(1) how the State will carry out all of the required State activities described in subsection (g);

(2) how the State will identify and eliminate barriers to implementing effective early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs after the grant expires, including by engaging businesses and non-profit organizations;

(3) how the State will access and leverage additional resources necessary to sustain early college high schools or other dual enrollment programs; and

(4) such other information as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(g) STATE ACTIVITIES.—A State receiving a grant under this section shall use such funds for—

(1) creating outreach programs to ensure that middle and high school students, their families, and community members are aware of early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs in the State;

(2) planning and implementing a statewide strategy for expanding access to early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs for students who are underrepresented in higher education to raise statewide rates of high school graduation, college readiness, and completion of postsecondary degrees and credentials, with a focus on at-risk students, including identifying any obstacles to such a strategy under State law or policy;

(3) providing technical assistance to early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs, such as brokering relationships and agreements that forge a strong partnership between elementary and secondary and postsecondary partners;

(4) identifying policies that will improve the effectiveness and ensure the quality of early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs, such as access, funding, data and quality assurance, governance, accountability, and alignment policies;

(5) planning and delivering statewide training and peer learning opportunities for school leaders and teachers from early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs, which may include providing instructional coaches who offer on-site guidance;

(6) disseminating best practices in early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs from across the State and from other States; and

(7) facilitating Statewide data collection, research and evaluation, and reporting to policymakers and other stakeholders.

SEC. 10. REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT.

(a) REPORTING BY GRANTEEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish uniform guidelines for all grantees concerning information such grantees annually

shall report to the Secretary to demonstrate a grantee's progress toward achieving the goals of this Act.

(2) **CONTENTS OF REPORT.**—At a minimum, a report submitted under this subsection by an eligible entity receiving funds under section 5 for an early college high school or other dual enrollment program shall include the following information about the students participating in the school or program, for each category of students described in section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(h)(1)(C)(i)):

(A) The number of students.

(B) The percentage of students scoring advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic on the assessments described in section 1111(b)(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

(C) The performance of students on other assessments or measurements of achievement.

(D) The number of secondary school credits earned.

(E) The number of postsecondary credits earned.

(F) Attendance rate, as appropriate.

(G) Graduation rate.

(H) Placement in postsecondary education or advanced training, in military service, and in employment.

(I) A description of the school or program's student, parent, and community outreach and engagement.

(b) **REPORTING BY SECRETARY.**—The Secretary annually shall—

(1) prepare a report that compiles and analyzes the information described in subsection (a) and identifies the best practices for achieving the goals of this Act; and

(2) submit the report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives.

(c) **MONITORING VISITS.**—The Secretary's designee shall visit each grantee at least once for the purpose of helping the grantee achieve the goals of this Act and to monitor the grantee's progress toward achieving such goals.

(d) **NATIONAL EVALUATION.**—Not later than 6 months after the date on which funds are appropriated to carry out this Act, the Secretary shall enter into a contract with an independent organization to perform an evaluation of the grants awarded under this Act. Such evaluation shall apply rigorous procedures to obtain valid and reliable data concerning participants' outcomes by social and academic characteristics and monitor the progress of students from high school to and through postsecondary education.

(e) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary shall provide technical assistance to eligible entities concerning best practices in early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs and shall disseminate such best practices among eligible entities and State and local educational agencies.

SEC. 11. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

(a) **EMPLOYEES.**—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to alter or otherwise affect the rights, remedies, and procedures afforded to the employees of local educational agencies (including schools) or institutions of higher education under Federal, State, or local laws (including applicable regulations or court orders) or under the terms of collective bargaining agreements, memoranda of understanding, or other agreements between such employees and their employers.

(b) **GRADUATION RATE.**—A student who graduates from an early college high school supported under this Act in the standard number of years for graduation described in the eligible entity's application shall be con-

sidered to have graduated on time for purposes of section 1111(b)(2)(C)(6) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(2)(C)(6)).

By Mr. CONRAD (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 628. A bill to provide incentives to physicians to practice in rural and medically underserved communities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Conrad State 30 Improvement Act to extend and expand this program's success in bringing doctors to communities that would otherwise not have access to health care services. In the last Congress, a very similar version of this bill had extremely widespread support in the medical community and a diverse group of cosponsors in the Senate.

The Conrad State 30 program, which I helped create in 1994, has brought thousands of physicians to underserved communities in all 50 States, across our great country. Under the program, foreign doctors already in the country for medical training are granted a waiver from a visa requirement to return to their home country for 2 years. In exchange for this waiver, the doctors must commit to providing health care to underserved populations in the United States for 3 years.

By 2020, some projections show that the United States may have 200,000 fewer doctors than it needs; that is a staggering statistic, and one that cannot be taken lightly. If this shortfall is allowed to materialize, rural areas, like my State of North Dakota, will undoubtedly be among the hardest hit.

Given the looming deficit of doctors and an increasingly competitive global marketplace, it is vital that we maintain the incentives for qualified foreign physicians to serve patients in this country. The immigration benefits historically provided by the Conrad 30 program, and enhanced in this bill, provide crucial incentives to foreign doctors. When they do come to our country, it is vital that we make sure that they end up in the places that need them most.

This bill makes the Conrad 30 program permanent, something that I believe is long overdue. It also invites a new group of foreign doctors to take part in the program, a change that could dramatically expand the pool of doctors practicing in rural and underserved areas. Further, the bill creates a mechanism by which the current cap of 30 doctors per State can significantly expand, while protecting the interests of those States that have had difficulty recruiting doctors under the program. Finally, the bill creates an important new incentive for doctors to participate in the program by granting them a green card cap exemption when they have completed their service.

I strongly believe the Conrad State 30 Improvement Act can be of great benefit to every state in the country and help combat the growing shortage of health care providers in the U.S.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. VOINOVICH, and Mr. KOHL):

S. 629. A bill to facilitate the part-time reemployment of annuitants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to introduce a bill with my colleagues Senators VOINOVICH and KOHL that will strengthen the Federal Government's ability to serve the public at a time when Federal agencies face a wave of retirement of highly experienced employees.

When we think about the coming demographic shock of millions of Baby Boomers reaching retirement age, we usually focus on the cash-flow implications for the Social Security and Medicare programs. But their aging will also have a profound effect on the Federal workforce.

On average, retirements from the Federal workforce have exceeded 50,000 a year for a decade. The numbers will certainly rise in the near future. The Office of Personnel Management calculates that 60 percent of the current Federal workforce, whose civilian component approaches three million people, will be eligible to retire during the coming 10 years.

Federal agencies, which already must hire more than a quarter-million new employees each year, will need to work hard to replace those retirees, as the private sector and state and local governments will be facing the same problem and competing for qualified replacements.

The Baby Boom retirement wave will have another impact. It will cause a sudden acceleration in the loss of accumulated skills and mentoring capabilities that experienced workers possess.

Research has repeatedly shown that, in general, older workers equal or outperform younger workers in organizational knowledge, ability to work independently, commitment, productivity, flexibility, and mentoring ability. Making good use of their talents is, therefore, not charity. It is common sense and sound management.

Federal agencies recognize the value of older workers, as witnessed by the fact that nearly 4,500 retirees have been allowed to return to full-time work on a waiver basis.

Agencies could make use of even more Federal annuitants for short-term projects or part-time work, but for a disincentive in current law.

Current law mandates that annuitants who return to work for the Federal Government must have their salary reduced by the amount of their annuity during the period of reemployment. The bill I introduce today with Senators VOINOVICH and KOHL would provide a limited but vital measure of relief to agencies who could benefit from the skills and knowledge of Federal retirees. It provides an opportunity for Federal agencies to reemploy retirees without requiring them to take pay cuts based on their annuity payment.

This simple but powerful reform will provide some much needed hiring flexibilities for agencies, especially given the expertise the Federal Government will need to effectively implement the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee held a hearing earlier this month where we discussed how oversight entities will meet their responsibilities to ensure that stimulus funds are spent effectively. Acting Comptroller General Gene Dodaro indicated that the reemployment of annuitants is an essential authority that the Government Accountability Office uses when circumstances arise that require rapid staffing increases. Using statutory authority possessed by GAO, the agency is able to attract and hire back their annuitants without offsetting their pay by the amount of their pension.

Most executive branch agencies do not enjoy similar flexibility as GAO. Instead, current law requires these agencies to offset an annuitant's salary, unless the agency can first obtain a waiver from OPM. This waiver will be granted if the agency demonstrates to OPM that only a particular annuitant is qualified to fill a particular need and the annuitant will only return if his or her salary is not offset. The waiver process is administratively cumbersome, and often prevents agencies from even considering a returning annuitant for an important position.

Whether at GAO or in our Government's Inspectors General offices, experienced, qualified former employees—with institutional knowledge—could play an important role in oversight of stimulus spending. This point was recently made by both Acting Comptroller General Dodaro and the Chair of the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, CIGIE, Phyllis Fong, in testimony before the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

Inspectors General will have to quickly hire experienced auditors and investigators to ensure critical oversight of stimulus spending. This legislation will allow IG offices to bring back valuable and experienced employees to the Federal Government to ensure aggressive oversight, enhanced transparency, and accountability for taxpayer dollars.

Ensuring an experienced acquisition workforce is available to oversee stimulus spending is just as critical. The government spent \$532 billion on contracts last year—a 140 percent increase from 2001 to 2008. At the same time, the Federal Government entered the 21st century with 22 percent fewer federal civilian acquisition personnel than it had at the start of the 1990s. As early as 2012, 50 percent of this workforce will be eligible to retire. This means that as our contract spending continues to increase dramatically, our contracting workforce continues to shrink. This legislation will allow

agencies to bring in experienced acquisition personnel at a time when they are desperately needed—whether to ensure that stimulus funds are spent wisely or to help administer over \$500 billion in government contract spending.

Several organizations have endorsed the reforms in our bill, including the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, the Partnership for Public Service, and the Government Managers Coalition.

I would also note two important points about the bill.

First, it will not materially affect the necessary flow of younger workers into Federal agencies. The bill contemplates reemployment for part-time or project work of not more than 520 hours in the first six months following the start of annuity payments, not more than 1,040 hours in any 12-month period, and not more than 3,120 hours total for the annuitant's lifetime. In terms of eight-hour days, those figures are equivalent to 65, 130, and 390 days, respectively.

These limits will give agencies flexibility in assigning retirees to limited-time or limited-scope projects, including mentoring and collaboration, without evading or undermining the waiver requirement for substantial or full-time employment of annuitants.

I would also note that this bill gives no cause for concern about financial impact. Reemployed annuitants would be performing work that the agencies needed to do in any case, but would not require any additional contributions to pension or savings plans. Meanwhile, their retiree health and life insurance benefits would be unaffected by their part-time work. Even without making any allowance for the positive effects of their organizational knowledge, commitment, productivity, and mentoring potential, their reemployment is likely to produce net savings.

This measure offers benefits for Federal agencies, for Federal retirees who would welcome the opportunity to perform part-time work, and for taxpayers, especially during these tough economic times. I urge my colleagues to support it.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 630. A bill to make technical amendments to laws containing time periods affecting judicial proceedings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, we introduce the Statutory Time-Periods Technical Amendments Act of 2009. I thank Senator SPECTER, the Ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee and Senators WHITEHOUSE and SESSIONS, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Administrative Oversight and Courts Subcommittee for co-sponsoring.

This legislation incorporates recommendations from the Judicial Conference of the United States to alter

deadlines in certain statutes affecting court proceedings to account for recent amendments to the Federal time-computation rules. This bipartisan bill would provide judges and practitioners with commonsense deadlines that are less confusing and less complex than current deadlines, and also ensure that existing time periods are not shortened.

After much study and significant public comment, the Judicial Conference's Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure and the Advisory Committees on Appellate, Bankruptcy, Civil, and Criminal Rules arrived at proposed new rules intended to provide predictability and uniformity to the current process of calculating court deadlines. The proposed rules respond, in part, to findings from the Judicial Conference that the current time-computation process is confusing and can lead to missed deadlines and litigants' loss of important rights. Under the current time-calculation rules, weekends and holidays are not counted when calculating court deadlines of less than 30 days, but are counted for calculating court deadlines longer than 30 days. The proposed new rules simplify this process by counting holidays and weekends regardless of a court deadline's time period. According to the Judicial Conference, these proposed changes would respond to practitioners' complaints and criticism from judges.

This legislation would amend a number of Federal civil and criminal statutes affecting court proceedings and harmonize them with the proposed rules. First, this remedial bill would alter certain statutory court deadlines to counterbalance any shortening of the time period resulting from the "days are days" approach. For example, the bill changes 5 days to 7 days, and 10 days to 14 days, to prevent time periods from becoming shorter when a practitioner counts all days, including weekends. This change would, in effect, maintain the same time periods in the statutes. In addition, if a time period ends on a holiday or a weekend the time period would be extended to the next business day. The bill would also change some statutory deadlines that would otherwise be inconsistent with the amended rules deadlines and lead to confusion.

This bipartisan legislation is time-sensitive. Both the Department of Justice and Judicial Conference urge swift consideration of this proposal, to allow it to take effect on December 1, 2009, the same date as the amendments to the rules.

According to a letter the Department of Justice sent to the Judicial Conference last year: "Failure to adopt statutory changes that move in concert with the proposed rule changes will result in exactly the opposite effect of what is intended—changes to the rules alone will introduce greater confusion rather than desirable simplification." Although the Obama administration has not formally weighed

in on this legislation, I anticipate that the Justice Department will again support this proposal. In addition, this bill mirrors the proposal from the Judicial Conference which enjoyed broad support from numerous legal and bar organizations, including of the American College of Trial Lawyers, the Council of Appellate Lawyers, and the American Bar Association's Section of Litigation and Criminal Justice Section.

I hope we will consider this measure expeditiously and improve the effectiveness of our judicial system. Passing this bill will create a consistent and standard method for lawyers and judges to calculate court deadlines.

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. 630

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 "Statutory Time-Periods Technical Amendments Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS RELATED TO TITLE 11, UNITED STATES CODE.

Title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 109(h)(3)(A)(ii), by striking "5-day" and inserting "7-day";

(2) in section 322(a), by striking "five days" and inserting "seven days";

(3) in section 332(a), by striking "5 days" and inserting "7 days";

(4) in section 342(e)(2), by striking "5 days" and inserting "7 days";

(5) in section 521(e)(3)(B), by striking "5 days" and inserting "7 days";

(6) in section 521(i)(2), by striking "5 days" and inserting "7 days";

(7) in section 704(b)(1)(B), by striking "5 days" and inserting "7 days";

(8) in section 749(b), by striking "five days" and inserting "seven days"; and

(9) in section 764(b), by striking "five days" and inserting "seven days".

SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS RELATED TO TITLE 18, UNITED STATES CODE.

Title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 983(j)(3), by striking "10 days" and inserting "14 days";

(2) in section 1514(a)(2)(C), by striking "10 days" each place it appears and inserting "14 days";

(3) in section 1514(a)(2)(E), by inserting after "the Government" the following: "excluding intermediate weekends and holidays";

(4) in section 1963(d)(2), by striking "ten days" and inserting "fourteen days";

(5) in section 2252A(c), by striking "10 days" and inserting "14 days";

(6) in section 2339B(f)(5)(B)(ii), by striking "10 days" and inserting "14 days";

(7) in section 2339B(f)(5)(B)(iii)(I), by inserting after "trial" the following: "excluding intermediate weekends and holidays";

(8) in section 2339B(f)(5)(B)(iii)(III), by inserting after "appeal" the following: "excluding intermediate weekends and holidays";

(9) in section 3060(b)(1), by striking "tenth day" and inserting "fourteenth day";

(10) in section 3432, by inserting after "commencement of trial" the following: "excluding intermediate weekends and holidays";

(11) in section 3509(b)(1)(A), by striking "5 days" and inserting "7 days"; and

(12) in section 3771(d)(5)(B), by striking "10 days" and inserting "14 days".

SEC. 4. AMENDMENTS RELATED TO THE CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PROCEDURES ACT.

The Classified Information Procedures Act (18 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in section 7(b), by striking "ten days" and inserting "fourteen days";

(2) in section 7(b)(1), by inserting after "adjudgment of the trial," the following: "excluding intermediate weekends and holidays"; and

(3) in section 7(b)(3), by inserting after "argument on appeal," the following: "excluding intermediate weekends and holidays".

SEC. 5. AMENDMENT RELATED TO THE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT.

Section 413(e)(2) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 853(e)(2)) is amended by striking "ten days" and inserting "fourteen days".

SEC. 6. AMENDMENTS RELATED TO TITLE 28, UNITED STATES CODE.

Title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 636(b)(1), by striking "ten days" and inserting "fourteen days";

(2) in section 1453(c)(1), by striking "not less than 7 days" and inserting "not more than 10 days"; and

(3) in section 2107(c), by striking "7 days" and inserting "14 days".

SEC. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this Act shall take effect on December 1, 2009.

Mr. KOHL (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. BAYH):

S. 631. A bill to provide for nationwide expansion of the pilot program for national and State background checks on direct patient access employees of long-term care facilities or providers; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act along with my colleague, Senator COLLINS. This bill is the culmination of years of work and careful study, and would go a long way to ensuring the safety of vulnerable older Americans. We have hard evidence that this policy will work and will protect lives. It is vital that we consider getting this legislation moving soon, and I look forward to working with the Finance Committee, the elder justice community, and Congressman JOE SESTAK in the House to make that happen.

Thousands of individuals with a history of substantiated abuse or a criminal record are hired every year to work closely with exposed and defenseless seniors within our nation's nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. Because the current system of state-based background checks is haphazard, inconsistent, and full of gaping holes, predators can evade detection throughout the hiring process, securing jobs that allow them to assault, abuse, and steal from defenseless elders.

We can and must take action to stop this type of abuse by building on the resounding success of a seven-state background check pilot program, enacted as part of the 2003 Medicare Mod-

ernization Act, which enabled seven states to make major improvements in their existing screening procedures of individuals applying for jobs in long-term care settings. The results of this 3-year pilot program were a resounding success: more than 7,200 individuals with a history of abuse or violence were kept out of the workforce in Alaska, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, and Wisconsin.

The states who participated in the pilot have all chosen to continue their programs, and are taking additional steps to build on the success of the technological infrastructure they created. The Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act will expand these outstanding results nationwide by making it possible for all states to make these commonsense improvements. The cost of enabling states to efficiently connect registries and databases, expand the range of workers who are screened, and add a national criminal history check is very modest. If states take these steps, we can reduce the terrible toll of elder abuse. If we do not, experts tell us abuse rates will continue to rise.

Our straightforward approach is strongly endorsed by State Attorneys General across the country, the Elder Justice Coalition, which speaks for over 500 member organizations, AARP, the American Health Care Association, NCCNHR, the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, and advocates in hundreds of communities who work every day to protect the well-being of elders and individuals with disabilities.

Last Congress, the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act was passed unanimously out of the Finance Committee. We are so close to getting this policy passed. I ask my colleagues to join Senators COLLINS, KERRY, WHITEHOUSE, BINGAMAN, LEVIN, CASEY, LINCOLN, KLOBUCHAR, STABENOW, BAYH, and COCHRAN in supporting our efforts to reduce and prevent abuse of our elders and loved ones.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that support material be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be placed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the PARADE Intelligence Report, Mar. 1, 2009]

PROTECTING THE ELDERLY FROM ABUSE
(By Lyric Wallwork Winik)

In 2006, a 90-year-old New York grandmother was raped by a caregiver with a criminal record. The man worked in the nursing home where she lived. Similar incidents over the years have led many to wonder how criminals end up working with vulnerable populations in the first place.

While most states require background checks for nursing-home employees, there is no national database that allows employers to check for crimes committed in other states.

Sen. Herb Kohl (D., Wis.) has introduced legislation that would require the creation of a national cross-referencing system. According to the Senate Special Committee on

Aging, which Kohl leads, the Congressional Budget Office has estimated the cost at \$100 million over three years. A trial program in seven states found that 7000 applicants for eldercare positions had violent criminal records or a substantiated history of abuse. Says Kohl, "This policy is more than just a good idea in theory—we've implemented it in seven states and seen the results. Comprehensive background checks are routine for those who work with young children, and we should be protecting vulnerable seniors and disabled Americans in the same way."

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. ENSIGN):

S. 632. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that the payment of the manufacturers' excise tax on recreational equipment be paid quarterly; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I am pleased today to join with my friend Senator CRAPO to introduce an important piece of legislation that would help to strengthen the financial health of America's firearm and ammunition manufacturers, who in turn support wildlife conservation in America.

The firearm and ammunition industry pays a Federal excise tax of 11 percent on long guns and ammunition and 10 percent on handguns. The Tax and Trade Bureau in the Treasury Department collects this tax. The Bureau sends the proceeds to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, where they are deposited into the Wildlife Restoration Trust Fund, also known as the Pittman-Robertson Trust Fund.

The tax is a major source of conservation funding in America. Since 1991, the firearm and ammunition industry has contributed about \$3 billion to the Pittman-Robertson Fund and since the inception of the tax, has contributed over \$5.5 billion. In 2008, over \$321 million was collected.

Of all the industries that pay excise taxes on the sale of their products to support wildlife conservation efforts, firearms and ammunition manufacturers are the only ones that have to pay excise taxes every 2 weeks. Other industries, such as archery and fishing, pay their tax every 3 months.

This frequent payment obligation imposes a costly and inequitable burden on the firearms and ammunition industry. Manufacturers spend thousands of additional man-hours just to administer the paperwork associated with making the bi-weekly excise payments.

According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, changing the deposit schedule from a bi-weekly to quarterly payment would save the industry an estimated \$21.6 million dollars a year. That is money that the industry could use for investment in researching and developing new products, purchasing new manufacturing plants and equipment, and communicating with the hunting and shooting sports community.

Let me take a moment to explain what this legislation does not do. It

does not reduce the firearm and ammunition industry's excise tax rates. It simply adds fairness to the tax code.

It is important for my Colleagues to understand the history and nature of the firearm and ammunition excise tax. During the Great Depression, hunters and conservationists recognized that overharvesting of wildlife would destroy America's treasured wildlife and natural habitats. Sportsmen, state wildlife agencies, and the firearm and ammunition industries lobbied Congress to extend the existing 10 percent excise tax and impose a new 11 percent excise tax to create a new fund. The fund was called the Pittman-Robertson Trust Fund after Senator Key Pittman of Nevada and Representative A. Willis Robertson of Virginia. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the legislation into law in 1937.

The industry, hunters, and conservationists came together to create this structure. They recognized the importance of conservation. And they encouraged Congress to impose a tax on their guns and ammo. It is rare thing when taxpayers ask to be taxed. But preserving our country's wildlife habitat was and continues to be that important.

Today, more than \$700 million each year is generated and used exclusively to establish, restore, and protect wildlife habitats.

Now let me explain the effect that the bill we are introducing today would have on the Pittman-Robertson Trust Fund. As the Joint Committee on Taxation explained in its revenue estimate, the net budget effect to the fund is \$4 million. This is purely a result of the shift in the timing of collections, from bi-weekly to quarterly, over a 10-year budget window. Consumers of firearms and ammunition would still pay the exact same amount of tax.

The firearm and ammunition industry recognizes the ten-year \$4 million loss to the trust fund. The industry developed a comprehensive 5-year proposal to ease this effect. Under the proposal, the industry would contribute \$150,000 a year for the next 5 years, a total of \$750,000, to the fund.

These actions again show the partnership between hunters, conservation groups, and the firearm and ammunition industry to protect conservation programs and initiatives. That's why this legislation is supported by the following groups: Archery Trade Association; Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; Boon and Young; Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation; Delta Waterfowl; Ducks Unlimited; National Rifle Association; National Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc.; National Wild Turkey Federation; North American Wetlands Conservation Council; Pheasants Forever; Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; Safari Club International; Wildlife Management Institute; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance.

I urge my Colleagues to support this legislation. I am very glad that Sen-

ators LINCOLN, SNOWE, ROBERTS, ENSIGN and ENZI have also signed onto this legislation as original cosponsors. I hope that we can come together, just as the industry, hunters, and conservation groups have, to pass this legislation. It is a matter of tax fairness. Let us do our part to correct this inequity in the tax code. Let us do our part to support an American industry that in turn supports wildlife habitat restoration and conservation.

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. 632

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 "Firearms Fairness and Affordability Act".

SEC. 2. TIME FOR PAYMENT OF MANUFACTURERS' EXCISE TAX ON RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) of section 6302 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to mode or time of collection) is amended to read as follows:

"(d) TIME FOR PAYMENT OF MANUFACTURERS' EXCISE TAX ON RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT.—The taxes imposed by subchapter D of chapter 32 of this title (relating to taxes on recreational equipment) shall be due and payable on the date for filing the return for such taxes."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to articles sold by the manufacturer, producer, or importer after the date of the enactment of this Act.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. DORGAN):

S. 633. A bill to establish a program for tribal colleges and universities within the Department of Health and Human Services and to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to authorize the provision of grants and cooperative agreements to tribal colleges and universities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, my colleagues and I rise today to introduce the Tribal Health Promotion and Tribal Colleges and Universities Advancement Act of 2009.

Indian Education is perhaps the most important issue facing Indian Country today because education represents hope. Higher education leads to better job opportunities. Better jobs lead to higher income. Higher income leads to greater access to health care, adequate housing and overall, a higher quality of life. Higher quality of life leads to strong communities. Happy, healthy and strong communities are more resistant to the destructive forces of poverty such as chemical abuse, violence and neglect. This bill will improve Indian Country by addressing three of the most pressing issues facing it today: healthcare, job creation and education.

No one disagrees that 85 percent unemployment in Indian Country is unacceptable. No one disagrees that it is unacceptable that the majority of America's at-risk youth live in Indian Country. However, merely reciting these statistics over and over will not make the situation any better. We need to work together to make Indian Country a better place to live, work and raise a family.

We introduced this vital legislation to help advance the remarkable work of tribal colleges and universities. Through grants awarded under this bill, tribal colleges and universities will have additional resources necessary to strengthen Indian communities by providing healthy living and disease prevention education, outreach and workforce development programs, research, and capacity building. Not only will it improve education, but it will also improve the delivery of culturally appropriate health care services. In addition to good education and increased access to health care, this bill will also help create good jobs for tribal members living on American Indian reservations.

Tribal Colleges and Universities are accredited by independent, regional accreditation agencies, and like all institutions of higher education, must undergo stringent performance reviews to retain their accreditation status. In addition to offering postsecondary education opportunities, tribal colleges serve reservation communities by providing critical services including: libraries, community centers, cultural, historical and language programs; tribal archives, career centers, economic development and business centers; health and wellness centers, public meeting places, child and elder care centers. Despite their many obligations, functions, and notable achievements, tribal colleges remain the most poorly funded institutions of higher education in this country.

The continued success and future of the Nation's tribal colleges and universities depends on their ability to provide higher education and community outreach programs. For them to succeed however, they must have the financial resources to do so.

As a Montanan and member of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, I am proud to introduce this legislation. I look forward to swift consideration and eventual passage.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 635. A bill to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate a segment of Illabot Creek in Skagit County, Washington, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mrs. MURRAY. 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 placed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 635

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF WILD AND SCENIC RIVER SEGMENTS.

Section 3(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“() ILLABOT CREEK, WASHINGTON.—The 14.3 mile segment from the headwaters of Illabot Creek to 1,000 feet south of and at no point closer than 200 feet from the Rockport-Cascade Road, flowing through lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, and Seattle City Light, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture as follows:

“(A) The 4.3 mile segment from the headwaters of Illabot Creek to the boundary of Glacier Peak Wilderness Area as a wild river.

“(B) The 10 mile segment from the boundary of Glacier Peak Wilderness to 1,000 feet south of Rockport-Cascade Road as a recreational river.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 76—EX-PRESSING 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

Ms. CANTWELL submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. RES. 76

Whereas the United States and the People's Republic of China are among the world's largest economies, are the world's largest producers, consumers, and importers of energy, and are the world's largest sources of energy-related greenhouse gas emissions;

Whereas future growth in the United States, China, and other countries should follow a model for energy use that does not further jeopardize the planet's climate and that presents numerous opportunities for significant economic growth;

Whereas a global transformation to the use of clean energy will require the adoption of renewable energy technologies to reduce carbon emissions and to build energy-efficient infrastructures;

Whereas that global transformation will also require substantial amounts of clean energy and environmental goods and services to be traded among the United States, China, and other countries;

Whereas tariffs imposed by foreign countries on renewable energy goods such as solar water heaters can be as high as 35 percent, tariffs on solar cells can be as high as 23 percent, and tariffs on wind power generating sets and hydraulic turbines can be as high as 25 percent; and

Whereas it is in the best interests of all countries to reduce or eliminate tariff and nontariff barriers to trade in clean energy and environmental goods and services: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the United States and the People's Republic of China should—

(A) work together to reduce or eliminate tariff and nontariff barriers to trade in clean

energy and environmental goods and services; and

(B) work through the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation and the World Trade Organization to reach a multilateral agreement to reduce or eliminate such barriers; and

(2) reducing or eliminating tariff and nontariff barriers to trade in clean energy and environmental goods and services will allow the United States, China, and other countries to develop, promote, and deploy clean energy technologies to meet global environmental challenges.

SENATE RESOLUTION 77—EX-PRESSING 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

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. VOINOVICH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 77

Whereas the United States and the People's Republic of China are the world's largest producers, consumers, and importers of energy and account for 36 percent of global primary energy use and 41 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions;

Whereas, in 2007, China surpassed the United States to become the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases and China is projected to increase emissions of greenhouse gases by 3.3 percent annually during the next 2 decades;

Whereas, by working together to tackle shared economic, environmental, and security challenges, the United States and China can more quickly and cost-effectively develop and implement cleaner, 21st-century energy systems;

Whereas efforts to develop and implement such systems will benefit from a foundation in sound science and policies that rely on and augment the vast technical capabilities and resources of both the United States and China; and

Whereas an action plan resulting from a bilateral agreement on clean energy cooperation between the United States and China may serve as a catalyst for the economic growth of the United States, an expression of United States foreign policy with respect to mitigating climate change, and a means for accelerating the development of a global clean energy economy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the United States and the People's Republic of China should negotiate a bilateral agreement under which the United States and China agree to cooperate in the development and use of clean energy; and

(2) the negotiation of such an agreement would send a clear signal to the world community that the United States is ready to lead a robust effort to mitigate global climate change that involves all countries that are major emitters of greenhouse gases.

SENATE RESOLUTION 78—DESIGNATING MARCH 22, 2009, AS “NATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS APPRECIATION DAY”

Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to: