

V. PRIOR REGULATIONS FOR REPORTORIAL SERVICES RESCINDED

All previous rules and regulations of the Committee on Rules and Administration governing rates payable to commercial reporting firms for preparation of transcripts of hearings in the Senate are hereby canceled and rescinded.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE OF THESE REGULATIONS

These regulations are effective on March 27, 2009.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING SENATORS' OFFICIAL PERSONNEL AND OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

(Adopted by the Committee on Rules and Administration Pursuant to Senate Resolution 170 agreed to September 19, 1979, as amended May 22, 1992, further amended November 3, 2003, further amended March 27, 2009.)

Section 1. For the purposes of these regulations, the following definitions shall apply:

a. Documentation means invoices, bills, statements, receipts, or other evidence of expenses incurred, approved by the Committee on Rules and Administration.

b. Official expenses means ordinary and necessary business expenses in support of the Senators' official and representational duties.

Section 2. No reimbursement will be made from the contingent fund of the Senate for any official expenses incurred under a Senator's Official Personnel and Office Expense Account, in excess of \$50, unless the voucher submitted for such expenses is accompanied by documentation, and the voucher is certified by the properly designated staff member and approved by the Senator.

Section 3. Official expenses of \$50 or less must either be documented or must be itemized in sufficient detail so as to leave no doubt of the identity of, and the amount spent for, each item. Items of a similar nature may be grouped together in one total on a voucher, but must be itemized individually on a supporting itemization sheet.

Section 4. Travel expenses shall be subject to the same documentation requirements as other official expenses, with the following exceptions:

a. Hotel bills or other evidence of lodging costs will be considered necessary in support of per diem.

b. Documentation will not be required for reimbursement of official travel in a privately owned vehicle.

Section 5. No documentation will be required for reimbursement of the following classes of expenses, as these are billed and paid directly through the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper:

a. Official telegrams and long distance calls and related services;

b. Stationery and other office supplies procured through the Senate Stationery Room for use for official business.

Section 6. The Committee on Rules and Administration may require documentation for expenses incurred of \$50 or less, or authorize payment of expenses incurred in excess of \$50 without documentation, in special circumstances.

Section 7. Vouchers for the reimbursement of official travel expenses to a Senator, employee, detailee pursuant to section 503(b)(3) of PL 96-465, or individual serving on a nominee recommendation panel pursuant to 2 USC 58(h) shall be accompanied by an "Expense Summary Report—Travel" signed by such person. Vouchers for the reimbursement to any such individual for official expenses other than travel expenses shall be accompanied by an "Expense Summary Report—Non-Travel" signed by such person.

CHANGES TO THE SENATE TRAVEL REGULATIONS TO REFLECT CHANGES WITHIN THE UPDATED SIGNATURE REGULATIONS

II. Regulations Governing Senators' Official Personnel and Office Expense Accounts Adopted by the Committee on Rules and Administration Pursuant to Senate Resolution 170 agreed to September 19, 1979, as amended.

Section 1. For the purposes of these regulations, the following definitions shall apply:

a. Documentation means invoices, bills, statements, receipts, or other evidence of expenses incurred, approved by the Committee on Rules and Administration.

b. Official expenses means ordinary and necessary business expenses in support of the Senators' official and representational duties.

Section 2. No reimbursement will be made from the contingent fund of the Senate for any official expenses incurred under a Senator's Official Personnel and Office Expense Account, in excess of \$50, unless the voucher submitted for such expenses is accompanied by documentation, and the voucher is certified by the properly designated staff member and approved by the Senator.

Section 3. Official expenses of \$50 or less must either be documented or must be itemized in sufficient detail so as to leave no doubt of the identity of, and the amount spent for, each item. Items of a similar nature may be grouped together in one total on a voucher, but must be itemized individually on a supporting itemization sheet.

Section 4. Travel expenses shall be subject to the same documentation requirements as other official expenses, with the following exceptions:

c. Hotel bills or other evidence of lodging costs will be considered necessary in support of per diem.

d. Documentation will not be required for reimbursement of official travel in a privately owned vehicle.

Section 5. No documentation will be required for reimbursement of the following classes of expenses, as these are billed and paid directly through the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper:

e. Official telegrams and long distance calls and related services;

f. Stationery and other office supplies procured through the Senate Stationery Room for use for official business.

Section 6. The Committee on Rules and Administration may require documentation for expenses incurred of \$50 or less, or authorize payment of expenses incurred in excess of \$50 without documentation, in special circumstances.

Section 7. Vouchers for the reimbursement of official travel expenses to a Senator, employee, detailee pursuant to section 503(b)(3) of PL 96-465, or individual serving on a nominee recommendation panel pursuant to 2 USC 58(h) shall be accompanied by an "Expense Summary Report—Travel" signed by such person. Vouchers for the reimbursement to any such individual for official expenses other than travel expenses shall be accompanied by an "Expense Summary Report—Non-Travel" signed by such person.

The proposed update specifies that the obligation date on a voucher is the transaction date on a third party vendor (Visa Card) monthly statement or invoice. The current regulations will be amended by the addition of the highlighted language.

COMMITTEE REGULATIONS GOVERNING ADVANCE PAYMENT

(Adopted by the Committee on Rules and Administration, October 30, 1997, Amended on September 30, 1998, Further Amended on March 27, 2009)

Under the authority granted by Sec. 1(b) for P.L. 105-55, the FY98 Legislative Branch

Appropriations bill and using these regulations—

The term "advance payment" means any expense authorized, by the Committee on Rules and Administration, pursuant to P.L. 105-55.

By the above definition of advance payment and following the enactment of the FY98 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill, in addition to subscriptions, the following items are for advance payment:

a) Rental of water coolers (cooler units only/not for water)

b) Monthly maintenance on equipment that is either non-standard and/or above the \$500 limit

c) Cable TV services (including basic satellite service where needed)

d) Online services (for official use by the Senator only)

e) Rental booths at State Fairs, rent for space to be used during town hall meetings and associated costs (not to include insurance)

f) Conference and seminar fees (not to include meals charged separately)

g) Payments on leased equipment

h) Paging service

i) Clipping services

j) Yellow page listings (not to include the classified yellow pages)

k) State office rents, up to 1 year in advance

l) Metro subsidy, one week in advance of the new month

m) Pre-paid cellular and telephone communications

The date of transaction will determine the fiscal year for payments of government authorized charge cards or reimbursements to Members and staff. Additionally, for a charge card statement that crosses fiscal years, the transaction dates will be used to determine the fiscal year, which could require submitting two separate vouchers for one statement. If an office has documentation proving the transaction took place in a different fiscal year than the statement stipulates, that documentation will determine the fiscal year.

All Senate Offices (Member Offices, Committees, and Officers of the Senate) are authorized to voucher the initiation or renewal of subscriptions (print and digital) based on the obligation or transaction date.

With respect to charges for on-line services, paging services, clipping services, and equipment maintenance, advance payment shall only be made in the cases of "flat fee services."

Also, no advance payment will be allowed in instances where cancellation fees may be incurred. Time limitation on the obligation of funds is restricted to a Member's six-year term of office and a Committee's biennial funding period, or for Officers of the Senate, the term of a Congress.

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, earlier this month, the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence released a report, "Exporting Gun Violence," that documents how Mexican drug gangs are exploiting weak U.S. gun laws and corrupt gun sellers in the U.S. to amass arsenals of high powered guns. These guns have been used to kill thousands in Mexico and pose an increasingly grave security threat to both Mexico and the United States.

Mexican law enforcement officials are increasingly being outgunned by

drug gangs bearing military-style assault weapons, .50 caliber sniper rifles and other high powered weapons that originate from the United States. According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, ATF, more than 7,770 guns recovered from crime scenes in Mexico were traced back to gun dealers in the U.S. during 2008, up from 3,300 in 2007. The ATF has warned that an “iron river of guns is streaming across the border at such a pace that some are being recovered in Mexico within days after their purchase in the U.S.”

According to the U.S. Department of State's latest International Narcotics Control Strategy report, “U.S.-purchased or stolen firearms account for an estimated 95 percent of Mexico's drug related killings.” Unlike Mexico's tougher gun laws, unlicensed sellers in the U.S. are allowed to sell guns without a background check, civilians are permitted to purchase military-style assault weapons, and there are no limits on the quantity of guns that can be sold at any given time. In the U.S., a trafficker can purchase as many guns they want from an unlicensed seller, no questions asked.

On March 17, 2009, both ADM James Stavridis, commander of the U.S. Southern Command, and GEN Gene Renaut, commander of the U.S. Northern Command, testified during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, which I chaired, that the large flow of guns into Mexico and Central America from the U.S. is having a destabilizing impact in those countries. Many believe this destabilization could pose a significant national security threat to the U.S. According to the report, Mexican Attorney General Medina Mora has stated that, before the assault weapons ban in the U.S. was allowed to expire, only 21 percent of the weapons seized from traffickers were assault rifles, while today, it is more than half.

President Obama has called for a comprehensive approach to the growing level of violence in Mexico. However, unless existing gun laws are strengthened, drug cartels and criminals in Mexico and the United States will continue to build their arsenals. We must act to close the gun show loophole, reinstate the assault weapons ban and enact other commonsense gun safety legislation.

OMNIBUS PUBLIC LANDS ACT

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I was pleased to attend today's Presidential signing ceremony for the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009, H.R. 146. In signing the act into law, President Obama underscored the Nation's commitment to serve as a responsible steward of our public lands and cultural and natural resources.

As a bipartisan package of more than 160 individual bills, the enactment of this act culminates many hours of congressional hearings, deliberation, and

debate. As the former chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, I was proud to have chaired hearings on individual measures in the act and to have worked with my colleagues in the House and Senate to put together a public lands package that confirms our Nation's desire to ensure that future generations will enjoy and benefit from the preservation of natural resources and historic sites.

I join those who have praised this momentous act for setting aside more than 2 million acres of land as protected wilderness and more than 1,000 miles of wild and scenic rivers. It is important to note that this act also is invaluable in protecting, preserving, and memorializing our country's cultural heritage and natural resources. This act contains four provisions that I sponsored during the 110th Congress which acknowledge the historical contributions made by Native Hawaiians as well as the need to preserve Hawaii's unique heritage and biodiversity for future generations: H.R. 3332, the Kalaupapa Memorial Act; S. 1728, the Na Hoa Pili O Kaloko-Honokohau Advisory Commission Reauthorization Act; S. 2220, the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1963 Amendments Act; and S. 320, the Paleontological Resource Preservation Act, which preserves fossils across the Nation. In addition, it includes a bill that I cosponsored, S. 1680, the Izembek and Alaska Peninsula Refuge Enhancement Act of 2008, which addresses the needs of a rural and indigenous Alaska Native community.

Section 7108 authorizes a memorial to be established at Kalaupapa National Historical Park, which is located on a remote peninsula on the island of Molokai. This long overdue memorial will honor and perpetuate the memory of those Hansen's disease patients who were forcibly relocated to the Kalaupapa community, many of whom were buried with no marked grave. This measure authorizes a nonprofit organization, Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, consisting of the remaining Kalaupapa residents and the family and friends of current and past residents, to establish a memorial at a suitable location in the Park for the 8,000 residents who lived at the Kalaupapa and Kalawao communities. This monument empowers the people of Kalaupapa to share their story and the lessons learned as the community came together to overcome their hardships. Previously only recognized as a place of isolation, this monument will transform Kalaupapa into a place of healing, education, and contemplation connecting families to their ancestors.

The Na Hoa Pili O Kaloko-Honokohau Advisory Commission Reauthorization Act, section 7401, extends the authorization for the National Park's advisory commission through 2018. Located on the western coast of the island of Hawaii, Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park was established in 1978 to provide for

the preservation, interpretation, and perpetuation of the Park's cultural and natural features. The Advisory Commission has played an integral role in advising the National Park Service to provide for the education, enjoyment, and appreciation of traditional Native Hawaiian activities and culture within the Park.

The Kaloko-Honokohau Park is a unique part of the Hawaii National Park System as it is home to two types of fish ponds, as well as the 'Ai 'opio fish trap, a 1.7-acre pond comprised of a manmade stone and coral wall along the naturally curving shoreline. These are treasured sites not only from a cultural standpoint demonstrating the ingenuity of Native Hawaiians in engineering these fishponds but also from a resource management perspective on how in the 21st century we can utilize such traditional knowledge to enhance our understanding and shape our management practices today.

Recognizing the importance of the 'Ai 'opio fish trap, in 2008 the National Park Service Save America's Treasure program awarded a \$350,000 grant to Project Ola 'Ai 'opio, a Park Service initiative to restore the fish trap. Ocean waves and erosion have endangered the structural integrity of the trap and the grant will be used to methodically stabilize the kuapa—fish trap walls—over a 12-month period. This award not only aids in preservation of the fish trap but also ensures that visitors will be able to appreciate Hawaii's unique historical and cultural heritage into the future.

Section 13006 of the act contains my bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2008 through 2017 in the amount of \$5 million for the operation and maintenance of the National Tropical Botanical Garden. A congressional charter established the National Tropical Botanical Garden in 1964 to foster horticultural research, education, and plant preservation. This authorization enables the National Tropical Botanical Garden to meet its Federal mandate and preserve unique species found only in Hawaii for the benefit of future generations. The National Tropical Botanical Garden has proven itself to be a significant national and international resource. The tranquil beauty offered by its gardens, collection of rare and endangered plant life, focused library and herbarium collections, scientific research, conservation initiatives, and education programs have all benefited the United States.

The National Tropical Botanical Garden is expressly mandated to foster and encourage research of tropical flora in agriculture, forestry, horticulture, medicine, and other sciences for the benefit of all the people in the United States. It is a national resource for biological science. Most recently, in 2008, it discovered Bilirubin, an animal pigment, in plants. This important discovery documented for the first time that an animal pigment is naturally occurring in the seed of the white bird of paradise tree.