

Second, the bill seeks to bring to Haiti market-based reforestation projects that have been successful in other regions of the world. These projects are successful because they share certain characteristics. They: secure the cooperation and engagement of local communities and organizations; provide incentives to protect trees through sustainable, yet income-generating growth; and provide hands-on management and oversight of re-planting efforts.

Conservation groups such as Planting Empowerment, which is doing just this type of work in Panama, provide a model of success and this bill will encourage such groups to bring their efforts to Haiti.

Third, the bill expands the ability of conservation groups to work with the Haitian Government and international creditors to trade Haiti's international debt for revenue in what are known as debt-for-nature swaps.

Groups such as Conservation International, World Wildlife Fund, and The Nature Conservancy have successfully used this mechanism globally to save other tropical forests—this bill will encourage such groups to bring their efforts to Haiti.

Preservation of what remains of Haiti's tropical forest, and helping re-grow some of what has been lost, has numerous benefits for all of us, not just for Haiti. Tropical forests: play a critical role as carbon sinks to reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere; harbor a major portion of the Earth's biological and terrestrial resources; and provide habitats for an estimated 10 to 30 million plant and animal species, including species essential to medical research and agricultural productivity.

But attacking the desperate effect of deforestation in Haiti is the main purpose of this bill. As Haiti's Prime Minister, Michèle Pierre-Louis, recently said:

The whole country is facing an ecological disaster. We cannot keep going on like this. We are going to disappear one day. There will not be 400, 500 or 1,000 deaths [from hurricanes]. There are going to be a million deaths.

We must act to ensure that that day never comes. I urge my colleagues to support the Haiti Reforestation Act of 2009.

234TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S. ARMY

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, on June 14, we celebrate the 234th birthday of the U.S. Army. For more than two centuries, the Army has fought to preserve the principles of democracy both here in the United States and around the globe.

It was 234 years ago today that the U.S. Army was established to defend our Nation. From the Revolutionary War to operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, our soldiers have served with honor and a deep commitment to our Nation's core values and beliefs.

In 1946, during an Army Day speech in Chicago, GEN Dwight D. Eisenhower said:

This day of tribute to the men and women of the United States Army is a day of national rededication to the ideals they served so well. The Army believes in strength without arrogance; in firmness without discourtesy; in loyalty without servility. It lives with pride in its cherished traditions of service to our commander-in-chief and to the people to whom it belongs.

This quote is as true today as it was then. Our all-volunteer force has performed superbly during these challenging times and has lived up to and exceeded our greatest expectations.

This Army birthday is special because it is also the Year of the Non Commissioned Officer. Since 1775, the Army has set apart its NCOs from other enlisted soldiers by distinctive insignia of grade.

Throughout the Army's history, the noncommissioned officer corps has distinguished itself as the world's most accomplished group of military professionals. Historical and daily accounts of life as an NCO are exemplified by acts of courage and a dedication and a willingness to do whatever it takes to complete the mission.

I also pay tribute to the families of our Army soldiers who give so much of their lives for our Nation. The important role families play is vital to the Army's success. They have our Nation's deepest appreciation for the support and devotion they provide to our men and women in uniform.

Today I wish to celebrate the strength of our Nation and the strength of our Army by saluting our noncommissioned officer corps and the Army's soldiers, families and civilians by wishing them a happy 234th birthday!

THANKS TO BERMUDA

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, last Thursday Bermuda welcomed to freedom four men who had been wrongly detained at Guantanamo Bay for more than 7 years. The men are ethnic Uighurs—a minority group from western China that has long suffered discrimination and oppression by China's Government. Their release is welcome news—our own Federal courts had cleared them for release, as did both the Bush and Obama administrations. Bermudian Prime Minister Dr. Ewart Brown and the Bermudian people have done a humanitarian service, and should be praised for it.

I strongly support President Obama's decision to close Guantanamo, which became a rallying cry for al-Qaida and other terrorist groups seeking recruits. I am disappointed that the United States did not find a way to resettle the Uighurs here, as there are Uighur communities in several States that would have welcomed them and helped them become productive members of society. It would also have been an important gesture to other countries that

we are asking to accept Guantanamo detainees. All the more reason that we should offer our sincere thanks to Bermuda for helping to put this sorry episode behind us.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COMMENDING THE GATTON ACADEMY OF MATH AND SCIENCE

• Mr. BUNNING. Madam President, I would like to take this time to congratulate the Gatton Academy of Math and Science in Bowling Green, KY.

Newsweek magazine recently published a list of schools recognized for challenging students. Separate from the top 1,500 public high schools in the country, Newsweek magazine published its list of 15 schools known as the Public Elites. The Gatton Academy of Math and Science was one of the distinguished 15 members of this list and marks the first time a school from Kentucky has earned a spot among the Public Elites.

The Gatton Academy of Math and Science is a selected group of high school juniors and seniors from around Kentucky who attend the Western Kentucky University. Their selection is based on test scores, grades, and submitted essays. Students in the program earn college credit at the Western Kentucky University in addition to completing their high school education.

As a supporter of education, I appreciate the opportunity to recognize the performance of this great educational facility.●

COMMENDING NORTH OLDHAM HIGH SCHOOL

• Mr. BUNNING. Madam President, I would like to take this time to congratulate North Oldham High School in Goshen, KY.

Newsweek magazine recently published a list of the top 1,500 public schools in the country. The 15 schools that made the list from Kentucky rank among the top 6 percent of public schools in the Nation. What is even more impressive is that Kentucky had three more schools ranked this year than in 2008, showing improvement in our State's schools. Placing as one of 15 schools from Kentucky on this list, North Oldham High School has earned national recognition for the fine performance of its students and faculty.

I am proud of the students of North Oldham High School. Their commitment to education is a fine example for the entire Commonwealth, and I take pride in recognizing them on the floor of the Senate.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF REVILLO, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Revillo, SD. Founded in 1884, the town of Revillo will celebrate its 125th anniversary this year.

Located in Grant County, Revillo possesses the strong sense of community that makes South Dakota such an outstanding place to live and work. Throughout its rich history, Revillo has continued to be a strong reflection of South Dakota's greatest values and traditions. The city of Revillo has much to be proud of and I am confident that Revillo's success will continue well into the future.

The town of Revillo will commemorate the 125th anniversary of its founding with celebrations held on June 19 thru June 21. I would like to offer my congratulations to the citizens of Revillo on this milestone anniversary and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.●

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ELK POINT, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Elk Point, SD. Founded in 1859, the city of Elk Point will celebrate its 150th anniversary this year.

Located in Union County, Elk Point serves as the county seat. The name Elk Point originates from the Lewis and Clark expedition campsite near present day Elk Point. As one of South Dakota's oldest communities, Elk Point possesses a rich history that continues to be a strong reflection of South Dakota's greatest values and traditions. The city of Elk Point has much to be proud of and I am confident that Elk Point's success will continue well into the future.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the citizens of Elk Point on this milestone anniversary and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.●

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF McLAUGHLIN, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize McLaughlin, SD. Founded in 1909, the city of McLaughlin will celebrate its 100th anniversary this year.

Named after COL James McLaughlin, the city of McLaughlin is located in Corson County. McLaughlin possesses the strong sense of community that makes South Dakota a great place to work and live. Throughout its rich history, McLaughlin has continued to be a strong reflection of South Dakota's greatest values and traditions. The city of McLaughlin has much to be proud of and I am confident that McLaughlin's success will continue well into the future.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the citizens of McLaughlin on this milestone anniversary and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF LEBANON, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Lebanon, SD. Founded in

1884, the town of Lebanon will celebrate its 125th anniversary this year.

Located in Potter County, Lebanon possesses the strong sense of community that makes South Dakota such an outstanding place to live and work. Throughout its rich history, Lebanon has continued to be a strong reflection of South Dakota's greatest values and traditions. The city of Lebanon has much to be proud of and I am confident that Lebanon's success will continue well into the future.

The town of Lebanon will commemorate the 125th anniversary of its founding with celebrations held on June 20 and June 21. I would like to offer my congratulations to the citizens of Lebanon on this milestone anniversary and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a treaty which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 10:14 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 1256. An act to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products, to amend title 5, United States Code, to make certain modifications in the Thrift Savings Plan, the Civil Service Retirement System, and the Federal Employees' Retirement System, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. REID).

At 2:28 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 729. An act to help keep students safe on school-run, overnight, off-premises field trips.

H.R. 2325. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1300 Matamoros Street in Laredo, Texas, as the "Laredo Veterans Post Office".

H.R. 2422. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located

at 2300 Scenic Drive in Georgetown, Texas, as the "Kile G. West Post Office Building".

H.R. 2661. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to increase the penalty for violations of section 119 (relating to protection of individuals performing certain official duties), and for other purposes.

H.R. 2765. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to prohibit recognition and enforcement of foreign defamation judgments and certain foreign judgments against the providers of interactive computer services.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 615. An act to provide additional personnel authorities for the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 729. An act to help keep students safe on school-run, overnight, off-premises field trips; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 2325. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1300 Matamoros Street in Laredo, Texas, as the "Laredo Veterans Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2422. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2300 Scenic Drive in Georgetown, Texas, as the "Kile G. West Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H. R. 2661. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to increase the penalty for violations of section 119 (relating to protection of individuals performing certain official duties), and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 2765. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to prohibit recognition and enforcement of foreign defamation judgments and certain foreign judgments against the providers of interactive computer services; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-47. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Louisiana urging Congress to take such actions as are necessary to maintain the current incentives for the exploration and production of domestic oil and natural gas; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 15

Whereas, Louisiana is a key energy state where over three hundred twenty thousand Louisianians are employed in the energy sector, and these jobs support over twelve billion dollars a year in household income; and Whereas, these jobs are from numerous small businesses and include welders, pipe fitters, barge workers, and engineers, and an estimated fifty thousand indirect workers support the energy sector; and

Whereas, the current federal budget proposal includes eight separate tax hikes on the energy economy totaling over thirty billion dollars, new fees on energy leases in the Gulf of Mexico, excise taxes on Gulf production, and also repeals several important tax incentives for Louisiana energy producers; and