

Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 453, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of "National Public Health Week".

AMENDMENT NO. 3486

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3486 proposed to H.R. 1586, an act to modernize the air traffic control system, improve the safety, reliability, and availability of transportation by air in the United States, provide for modernization of the air traffic control system, reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WEBB:

S. 3148. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the treatment of Department of Defense health coverage as minimal essential coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, today I introduced a bill that speaks directly to the welfare of our military service members and their families. TRICARE, TRICARE for Life, and the non-appropriated fund health plans are the programs that provide health care for our men and women in uniform, their families, retirees, and other eligible individuals. These programs, as well as today's military veterans health care system, exceed the minimum essential coverage required by the health care reform bill passed yesterday by the House of Representatives.

I am pleased to offer a companion bill to one introduced last week by my good friend, House Armed Services Committee Chairman IKE SKELTON, that explicitly protects TRICARE and NAF health plans. Representative SKELTON's bill, which passed Saturday by a vote of 403 to 0, makes it perfectly clear that no TRICARE or NAF health plan beneficiary will be required to purchase additional coverage beyond what they already have.

My companion legislation to Chairman SKELTON's provides a similar reassurance to our servicemembers and their families. It will amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 in a way that stipulates that Department of Defense TRICARE health-care coverage will be treated as minimal essential coverage under the health care reform bill when it is signed into law by the President.

There has been a great deal of confusion over the past year surrounding the future of TRICARE and other military health care programs. False allegations have been raised, for example, that the administration planned changes to TRICARE for Life that would jeopardize its future or substantially raise its cost for beneficiaries. It is important to set the record straight.

In my capacity as the chairman of the Personnel Subcommittee of the

Senate Committee on Armed Services, I am committed to protecting the health care coverage programs in place for the military today.

Supporting this bill will reassure our service members that the coverage provided by TRICARE and nonappropriated health plans is properly protected in law as meeting the requirements for individual health insurance mandated by the new health care reform bill. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 3150. A bill to increase the mileage reimbursement rate for members of the armed services during permanent change of station and to authorize the transportation of additional motor vehicles of members on change of permanent station to or from nonforeign areas outside the continental United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I rise to introduce a bill entitled the Service Members Permanent Change of Station Relief Act—or PCS Relief Act. I am proud to introduce this legislation and thank my cosponsor Senator PATTY MURRAY. This bill will provide our servicemembers and their families much-needed financial relief during these hard economic times.

Like most families, our servicemembers are pinching their pennies too. Unfortunately, often they incur many unnecessary financial burdens related to their service and their sacrifice. For instance, right now, our servicemembers with spouses and children are only reimbursed for shipping one vehicle to or from Alaska, Hawaii, and Guam during a permanent change of station. This means if they get directed to move to a military base in Alaska from Texas, or to Texas from Alaska, they must pay to transport a second car themselves, or they must sell their vehicle and purchase a new car at the next location. This can be a costly option.

However, many military families cannot afford to ship a second vehicle or purchase another car. Without a second vehicle, spouses and children who accompany a servicemember on a permanent change of station may be unable to hold a job, run daily errands, or otherwise participate in their new communities. Many States have large military bases, such as Joint Base Elmendorf and Fort Richardson in Alaska. With housing on one end and base services on another, some families cannot even get to the grocery store or take their children to a doctor in an emergency.

Colleagues, it is unacceptable that we put our military families in a position where they have to make a choice between the inability to meet daily needs and take care of their family in an emergency, or pay more than \$1,500 to ship a second vehicle. Under the PCS Relief Act, our military families will

be able to ship a second car to and from Hawaii, Alaska, and Guam to ease the hardships and alleviate needless costs.

To further alleviate needless costs, the legislation will increase the gas mileage reimbursement rate during a permanent change in station. Currently, when our personnel drive from one military base to the next on their government-directed move, they are reimbursed less than half the amount they get under temporary duty assignments. The temporary duty reimbursement rate reflects the true cost of operating a vehicle. The current PCS reimbursement rate of 16 cents per mile does not, creating yet another financial burden for servicemembers.

It doesn't make any sense that gas mileage reimbursement rates are different amounts for PCS and TDY. Our servicemembers get official orders to move. It is not optional.

They are both official business expenditures. We already ask so much of our servicemembers and their families. They are fighting two wars. They move at the military services' direction, relocating themselves and their families to new military bases every few years. It is unfair we are asking them to pay out of pocket on these government-directed moves, or experience unwarranted and pointless hardships due to financial constraints.

In these tough economic times, it is more important than ever that we show our support for our servicemembers and their families. Relieving stress and strain during a permanent change in station is the least we can do. I ask my colleagues to support the Service Members PCS Relief Act.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 463—RECOGNIZING THE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF NOWRUZ, EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO IRANIAN-AMERICANS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIETY, AND WISHING IRANIAN-AMERICANS AND THE PEOPLE OF IRAN A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. WEBB, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. BYRD, Mr. BURRIS, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. HATCH, Mr. KAUFMAN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

Whereas Nowruz marks the traditional Iranian New Year, which originated in ancient Persia, and dates back more than 3,000 years;

Whereas Nowruz, meaning a "New Day", occurs on the vernal equinox and celebrates the arrival of spring;

Whereas Nowruz symbolizes a time of renewal and community, harkens the departure from the trials and tribulations of the previous year, and brings hope for the New Year;

Whereas Nowruz is celebrated by nearly 300,000,000 Iranians and other peoples all over the world, including in the United States, Iran, and other countries in Central Asia, South Asia, Caucasus, Crimea, and the Balkan regions;

Whereas Nowruz is celebrated by more than 1,000,000 Iranian-Americans of all backgrounds, including those with Baha'i, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Zoroastrian, and non-religious backgrounds;

Whereas the people of Iran have a long history of celebrating Nowruz and are congratulated for their bringing in of the New Year;

Whereas Nowruz embodies the tradition that each individual's thinking, speaking, and conduct should always be virtuous and the ideal of compassion for our fellow human beings regardless of ethnicity or religion, and symbolizes a time of renewal and community;

Whereas the United States is a melting pot of ethnicities and religion and Nowruz contributes to the richness of American culture and is consistent with our founding principles of peace and prosperity for all;

Whereas in 539 B.C., Cyrus the Great established one of the earliest charters on human rights, which abolished slavery and allowed for freedom of religion, and this marker in Iranian history has had significant impact on the respect for human rights that Iranian-Americans carry today;

Whereas Nowruz serves to remind the people of the United States of the many noteworthy and lasting contributions of Iranian-Americans to the social and economic fabric of society in the United States;

Whereas Iranian-Americans continue to make contributions in all sectors of public life in the United States, including as government, military, and law enforcement officials working to uphold the Constitution of the United States and to protect all people in the United States;

Whereas Iranian-Americans are vibrant, peaceful, and law-abiding citizens, many of whom are of the Baha'i, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Zoroastrian faiths; and

Whereas the Iranian-American community continues to enrich the tapestry of the diversity in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the cultural and historical significance of Nowruz;

(2) encourages the peaceful observance of the Nowruz holiday in Iran, and strongly supports the right of all Iranians to exercise freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, and freedom of speech;

(3) expresses its appreciation for the contributions of Iranian-Americans to society in the United States in observance of Nowruz; and

(4) wishes Iranian-Americans and the people of Iran and all those who observe this holiday a prosperous new year.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 464—RECOGNIZING THE 189TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING GREEK AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. CASEY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. KERRY, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LEMIEUX, Mr. RISCH, Mr. INOUE, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DODD, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. NELSON of Florida,

Mr. REED, Mr. BAYH, Mr. KOHL, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. REID) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 464

Whereas the ancient Greeks developed the concept of democracy, in which the supreme power to govern was vested in the people;

Whereas the Founding Fathers of the United States, many of whom read Greek political philosophy in the original Greek, drew heavily on the political experience and philosophy of ancient Greece in forming our representative democracy;

Whereas Greek Commander in Chief Petros Mavromichalis, a founder of the modern Greek state, said to the citizens of the United States in 1821 that "it is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode and . . . in imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you";

Whereas the Greek national anthem, the "Hymn to Liberty", includes the words, "Most heartily was gladdened George Washington's brave land";

Whereas the people of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance to the Greek people during their struggle for independence;

Whereas Greece played a major role in the World War II struggle to protect freedom and democracy through such bravery as was shown in the historic Battle of Crete, which provided the Axis land war with its first major setback, setting off a chain of events that significantly affected the outcome of World War II;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of Greek civilians were killed in Greece during World War II in defense of the values of the Allies;

Whereas, throughout the 20th century, Greece was one of a few countries that allied with the United States in every major international conflict;

Whereas Greece is a strategic partner and ally of the United States in bringing political stability and economic development to the volatile Balkan region, having invested more than \$20,000,000,000 in the countries of the region, thereby helping to create more than 200,000 new jobs, and having contributed more than \$750,000,000 in development aid for the region;

Whereas Greece actively participates in peacekeeping and peace-building operations conducted by international organizations including the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe;

Whereas Greece received worldwide praise for its extraordinary handling during the 2004 Olympic Games of more than 14,000 athletes and more than 2,000,000 spectators and journalists, a feat Greece handled efficiently, securely, and with hospitality;

Whereas Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism, maintains excellent relations with Muslim nations and Israel;

Whereas the Government of Greece has taken important steps in recent years in furthering cross-cultural understanding and rapprochement with Turkey, as seen with the October 2009 visit to Turkey by the Prime Minister of Greece, George Papandreou, as his first trip abroad just days after being elected;

Whereas Greece and the United States are at the forefront of the effort for freedom, democracy, peace, stability, and human rights;

Whereas those and similar ideals have forged a close bond between Greece and the United States; and

Whereas it is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate March 25, 2010,

Greek Independence Day, with the Greek people and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which these two great nations were born: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) extends warm congratulations and best wishes to the people of Greece as they celebrate the 189th anniversary of the independence of Greece;

(2) expresses support for the principles of democratic governance to which the people of Greece are committed; and

(3) notes the important role that Greece has played in the wider European region and in the community of nations since gaining its independence 189 years ago.

#### AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3553. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3554. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3555. Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mrs. HUTCHISON) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1586, to modernize the air traffic control system, improve the safety, reliability, and availability of transportation by air in the United States, provide for modernization of the air traffic control system, reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes.

#### TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

**SA 3553.** Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

##### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Patient Choice Restoration Act".

##### SEC. 2. REPEAL.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and the amendments made by that Act, are repealed.

**SA 3554.** Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title I, add the following:

##### SEC. 15. PROHIBITION ON FUNDING FOR ACORN.

No Federal funds made available under this Act or the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act may be distributed to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) or its subsidiaries.

**SA 3555.** Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mrs. HUTCHISON) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1586, to modernize the air traffic control system, improve the safety, reliability, and availability of transportation by air in the United States, provide for modernization of the air traffic control system, reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes; as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: "An Act to modernize the air traffic control system, improve the safety, reliability, and availability of transportation by air in the United States, provide for modernization of the air traffic control system, reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes."