

Affairs to increase, effective December 1, 2010, the rates of veterans' compensation to keep pace with the rising cost of living in this country. The rate adjustment is equal to that provided on an annual basis to Social Security recipients and is based on the Consumer Price Index.

Congress regularly enacts legislation that would provide for a cost-of-living adjustment for veterans' compensation in order to ensure that inflation does not erode the purchasing power of the veterans and their families who depend upon this income to meet their daily needs. The 2011 COLA has not yet been determined.

The COLA affects, among other benefits, veterans' disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children. Many of the recipients of those benefits depend upon these tax-free payments not only to provide for their own basic needs, but those of their spouses and children as well. Without a COLA increase, these veterans and their families would see the value of their hard-earned benefits slowly diminish if there was an increase in inflation. If there is an increase in inflation, we in Congress would be neglecting our duty to ensure that those who sacrificed so much for this country receive the benefits and services to which they are entitled.

It is important that we view veterans' compensation, including the COLA, and indeed all benefits earned by veterans, as a continuing cost of war. It is clear that the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan will continue to result in injuries and disabilities that will yield an increase in claims for compensation. Currently, there are more than 3.1 million veterans in receipt of VA disability compensation.

Disbursement of disability compensation to our Nation's veterans constitutes one of the central missions of the Department of Veterans Affairs. It is a necessary measure of appreciation afforded to those veterans whose lives were forever altered by their service to this country.

I urge our colleagues to support passage of this COLA bill. I also ask our colleagues for their continued support for our Nation's veterans.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time; that the Veterans Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4667, which is the companion measure from the House, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill, H.R. 4667, be read the third time and passed; further, that S. 3107 be returned to the calendar; that the motions to reconsider be laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 4667) was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed.

99-YEAR TRIBAL LEASE AUTHORITY ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 507, S. 1448.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1448) to amend the Act of August 9, 1955, to authorize the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw, the Klamath Tribes, and the Burns Paiute Tribe to obtain 99-year lease authority for trust land.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 1448) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:
S. 1448

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

SECTION 1. LEASES OF RESTRICTED LAND.

Subsection (a) of the first section of the Act of August 9, 1955 (25 U.S.C. 415(a)), is amended in the second sentence by inserting "land held in trust for the Coquille Indian Tribe, land held in trust for the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, land held in trust for the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, land held in trust for the Klamath Tribes, and land held in trust for the Burns Paiute Tribe," after "lands held in trust for the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon,".

MODIFYING TRIBAL LEASE PROVISIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 508, S. 2906.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2906) to amend the Act of August 9, 1955, to modify a provision relating to leases involving certain Indian tribes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with amendments, as follows:

S. 2906

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

SECTION 1. LEASES INVOLVING CERTAIN INDIAN TRIBES.

The first section of the Act of August 9, 1955 (25 U.S.C. 415), is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), in the second sentence, by inserting "and land held in trust for the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians," after "the Kalispel Indian Reservation"; and

(2) in subsection (b), by inserting "the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, or the Kalispel Tribe of Indians" after "Tulalip Tribes".

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendments be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee amendments were agreed to.

The bill (S. 2906), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

REDUNDANCY ELIMINATION AND ENHANCED PERFORMANCE FOR PREPAREDNESS GRANTS ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 566, H.R. 3980.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3980) to provide for identifying and eliminating redundant reporting requirements and developing meaningful performance metrics for homeland security preparedness grants, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Redundancy Elimination and Enhanced Performance for Preparedness Grants Act".

SEC. 2. IDENTIFICATION OF REPORTING REDUNDANCIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMANCE METRICS FOR HOMELAND SECURITY PREPAREDNESS GRANT PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title XX of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 2023. IDENTIFICATION OF REPORTING REDUNDANCIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMANCE METRICS.

"(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'covered grants' means grants awarded under section 2003, grants awarded under section 2004, and any other grants specified by the Administrator.

"(b) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Redundancy Elimination and Enhanced Performance for Preparedness Grants Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that includes—

"(1) an assessment of redundant reporting requirements imposed by the Administrator on

State, local, and tribal governments in connection with the awarding of grants, including—

“(A) a list of each discrete item of data requested by the Administrator from grant recipients as part of the process of administering covered grants;

“(B) identification of the items of data from the list described in subparagraph (A) that are required to be submitted by grant recipients on multiple occasions or to multiple systems; and

“(C) identification of the items of data from the list described in subparagraph (A) that are not necessary to be collected in order for the Administrator to effectively and efficiently administer the programs under which covered grants are awarded;

“(2) a plan, including a specific timetable, for eliminating any redundant and unnecessary reporting requirements identified under paragraph (1); and

“(3) a plan, including a specific timetable, for promptly developing a set of quantifiable performance measures and metrics to assess the effectiveness of the programs under which covered grants are awarded.

“(c) BIENNIAL REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the initial report is required to be submitted under subsection (b), and once every 2 years thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a grants management report that includes—

“(1) the status of efforts to eliminate redundant and unnecessary reporting requirements imposed on grant recipients, including—

“(A) progress made in implementing the plan required under subsection (b)(2);

“(B) a reassessment of the reporting requirements to identify and eliminate redundant and unnecessary requirements;

“(2) the status of efforts to develop quantifiable performance measures and metrics to assess the effectiveness of the programs under which the covered grants are awarded, including—

“(A) progress made in implementing the plan required under subsection (b)(3);

“(B) progress made in developing and implementing additional performance metrics and measures for grants, including as part of the comprehensive assessment system required under section 649 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 749); and

“(3) a performance assessment of each program under which the covered grants are awarded, including—

“(A) a description of the objectives and goals of the program;

“(B) an assessment of the extent to which the objectives and goals described in subparagraph (A) have been met, based on the quantifiable performance measures and metrics required under this section, section 2022(a)(4), and section 649 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 749);

“(C) recommendations for any program modifications to improve the effectiveness of the program, to address changed or emerging conditions; and

“(D) an assessment of the experience of recipients of covered grants, including the availability of clear and accurate information, the timeliness of reviews and awards, and the provision of technical assistance, and recommendations for improving that experience.

“(d) GRANTS PROGRAM MEASUREMENT STUDY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the enactment of Redundancy Elimination and Enhanced Performance for Preparedness Grants Act, the Administrator shall enter into a contract with the National Academy of Public Administration under which the National Academy of Public Administration shall assist the Administrator in studying, developing, and implementing—

“(A) quantifiable performance measures and metrics to assess the effectiveness of grants administered by the Department, as required under

this section and section 649 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 749); and

“(B) the plan required under subsection (b)(3).

“(2) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the contract described in paragraph (1) is awarded, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that describes the findings and recommendations of the study conducted under paragraph (1).

“(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator such sums as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“Sec. 2023. Identification of reporting redundancies and development of performance metrics.”.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill (H.R. 3980), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

IMPROVING THE OPERATION OF CERTAIN FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Rules Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 5682, and that the Senate then proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5682) to improve the operation of certain facilities and programs of the House of Representatives, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 5682) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

COMMENDING THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Commerce Committee be dis-

charged from further consideration of S. Res. 623 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 623) commending the encouragement of interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics by the entertainment industry, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 623) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 623

Whereas science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (referred to in this preamble as “STEM”) are vital fields of increasing importance in driving the economic engine of the United States;

Whereas STEM-educated graduates have and will continue to play critical roles in helping to develop clean energy technologies, to find life-saving cures for diseases, to solve security challenges, and to discover new solutions for deteriorating transportation and infrastructure;

Whereas through 2018, STEM occupations are projected to provide 2,800,000 job openings;

Whereas over 90 percent of STEM occupations require at least some postsecondary education;

Whereas students across the country, especially young women and underrepresented minorities, need greater understanding and appreciation of STEM careers, and access to quality STEM opportunities;

Whereas the entertainment industry of the United States, comprised of movies, television, theater, radio, DVDs, video games, as well as other video and audio recordings and means of communications, has an extraordinary ability to reach the people of the United States, especially young people;

Whereas the entertainment industry has begun to make significant investments in support of STEM education; and

Whereas, for example, the Entertainment Industries Council has developed the Ready on the S.E.T. and . . . Action! initiative to elevate the importance of science, engineering, and technology in national entertainment and news productions by connecting STEM experts, companies, and organizations with the entertainment industry in order to disseminate accurate information about STEM professionals and careers, and producing the first-ever S.E.T. Awards Show this year to award accurate and impactful portrayals of STEM in movies, television series, radio and television news programs, and print and online journalism: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the effective use of the substantial influence and resources of the entertainment industry of the United States, by those members of the entertainment industry, such as the Entertainment Industries