

(Mr. COATS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1472, a bill to impose sanctions on persons making certain investments that directly and significantly contribute to the enhancement of the ability of Syria to develop its petroleum resources, and for other purposes.

S. 1514

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1514, a bill to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to Elouise Pepion Cobell, in recognition of her outstanding and enduring contributions to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and the Nation through her tireless pursuit of justice.

S. 1523

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1523, a bill to prohibit the National Labor Relations Board from ordering any employers to close, relocate, or transfer employment under any circumstance.

S. 1528

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1528, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to limit Federal regulation of nuisance dust in areas in which that dust is regulated under State, tribal, or local law, to establish a temporary prohibition against revising any national ambient air quality standard applicable to coarse particulate matter, and for other purposes.

S. 1538

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1538, a bill to provide for a timeout on certain regulations, and for other purposes.

S. 1540

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1540, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow credits for the purchase of franchises by veterans.

S. 1552

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1552, a bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to provide an exception to that Act for actions carried out against grizzly bears in self-defense, defense of others, or a reasonable belief of imminent danger.

S. 1558

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota

(Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1558, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to apply payroll taxes to remuneration and earnings from self-employment up to the contribution and benefit base and to remuneration in excess of \$250,000.

S. RES. 232

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 232, a resolution recognizing the continued persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China on the 12th anniversary of the campaign by the Chinese Communist Party to suppress the Falun Gong movement, recognizing the Tuidang movement whereby Chinese citizens renounce their ties to the Chinese Communist Party and its affiliates, and calling for an immediate end to the campaign to persecute Falun Gong practitioners.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 1561. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the deductibility of charitable contributions to agricultural research organizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, Agriculture is one of the key forces driving Oklahoma's economy. In 2008 alone, Oklahoma's agriculture industry directly supported 188,000 jobs and contributed more than \$8.5 billion to the States's economy. The importance of agriculture to the Nation's economy is also difficult to understate, and the industry's products rank among the top exports each year. This year, USDA estimates that U.S. farmers and livestock producers will export nearly \$140 billion in goods to nearly every country on Earth.

Knowing that strength, it is not surprising that the industry is a hotbed of innovation. The agriculture community has long been involved in the research and development of better crops and farming methods. This work has produced crops that are resistant to drought and certain farming chemicals, are packed with more and better nutrients, and ultimately provide higher yields for every acre farmed. This research will only grow in importance as the global population continues to grow and demand more food. Fortunately, the United States is leading the world in this effort.

Oklahoma is also a key agriculture R&D player in the United States. This is in large part due to the work of the Samuel R. Noble Foundation. Headquartered in Ardmore, OK, the Noble Foundation is one of the top 50 private foundations in the United States, and the foundation employs hundreds of scientists, agriculture con-

sultants, and research personnel who are actively researching better agriculture products and practices. Between 2009 and 2010, the foundation spent nearly \$80 million on agriculture research activities, and this work has recently resulted in development of Texoma MaxQ II, a cool-weather fescue grass that will reduce the reliance of livestock producers upon costly hay and feed for their livestock during the winter months. I congratulate the Noble Foundation on this breakthrough and look forward to hearing about the future benefits of this research.

The Food and Agriculture Organization has estimated that food productivity will need to expand by 70 percent over the next 40 years to meet rising global demand. This underscores the need for continued funding for agriculture research and development so that more breakthroughs like those at the Noble Foundation occur. Today, a substantial amount of agriculture research funding is provided by the Federal Government; however, the government's share is declining. Since fiscal year 2010, Federal funding for agriculture research has decreased by nearly \$200 million, and further cuts are likely as we try to tackle the national debt. Because government is scaling down its role, Congress should do what it can to encourage the private sector to fill the gap.

One way that we can do this is with the Charitable Agriculture Research Act, of which I am a cosponsor. This bill, introduced today by Senators STABENOW and THUNE, will allow the creation of Agricultural Research Organization, ARO, which would extend public charity tax status to entities conducting continuous agriculture R&D in collaboration with land-grant universities and agriculture colleges.

Currently, several organizations conducting research focused on agriculture are structured as private foundations. This is one of the two main types of charities that are provided with beneficial tax treatment under U.S. law. Public charities—the other type—are given full tax exempt status, but because private foundations are often very large and supported by a small group of donors, they are not completely tax free and must pay taxes on the investment income earned by their endowments. Donors are also prevented from collecting their full deduction on gifts relative to those made to public charities. Because of these restrictions, the United States is not reaching its full potential when it comes to attracting private dollars for agriculture research.

The Charitable Agriculture Research Act seeks to encourage individuals and families of wealth to contribute more of their assets to public agricultural research by working in conjunction with the Nation's land-grant universities and non land-grant colleges of agriculture. This legislation will provide donors with an additional option

of where to direct their agriculture research and development donations.

This beneficial tax treatment does not come without restrictions. To maintain its tax exempt status, an ARO must conduct research and development on agriculture issues in conjunction with a land-grant university or an agriculture college. An ARO must either commit more than 50 percent of its assets to the continuous active conduct of agriculture research or it must expend at least 3.5 percent of its endowment for the same in each calendar year. These restrictions are put in place to ensure that the ARO structure is not being abused as a tax shelter for the accumulated personal wealth of an ARO's benefactors.

Over the past decade many families with a passion for agricultural research have expressed their desire to do for their geographies and their crops of interest what the Noble Foundation has done for Oklahoma, forages, and beef cattle operations. However, the tax code is not conducive to such efforts and discourages them from maximizing their contributions to agricultural research.

The ARO tax structure is modeled after the extremely successful Medical Research Organization model. Similar to AROs, these charities must do their medical research in conjunction with a non-profit or government hospital. The Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the Stowers Institute for Medical Research are prime examples of MROs. The MRO structure has made these organizations more effective and productive, and I expect no less from the ARO tax structure.

This bill will directly benefit Oklahoma by building on its legacy as a leader in agriculture R&D. As better agricultural methods and crop yields are produced in Oklahoma, the State will continue to serve as a global leader in agriculture. Oklahoma is home to 86,000 farms that occupy 80 percent of the State's land area. The State has the land, the natural resources, and the facilities necessary to enhance agricultural research. The creation of AROs will help attract the necessary private capital to build on this success and boost research at our Nation's land-grant universities and non land-grant colleges of agriculture.

ARO's will not be provided with a new tax incentive or a benefit greater than existing charitable organizations. They will, however, offer individuals an additional choice of where to send their charitable dollars. When individuals donate to AROs they will have certainty that their money will contribute directly to agriculture research rather than to other causes, which are guarantees not provided by most other charitable organizations. As we face deeper budget cuts on everything from education to agriculture research, we need to take the steps to encourage the private sector to step into the void left by Washington. AROs will help do this in the agriculture R&D community, so I urge its swift passage.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts):

S. 1563. A bill to require the President's budget to include, at a minimum, a request for disaster funding based on the 10 year average; to the Committee on the Budget.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Safeguarding Disaster Funding Act of 2011, which I am introducing along with Senator BROWN from Massachusetts. This legislation would amend the Congressional Budget Act and the Budget Control Act to require the President to provide a more comprehensive view of disaster funding in his annual budget request.

Our bill would ensure that the true cost of disaster assistance is reflected in the President's budget, by requiring that Presidents' annual budget requests for disaster programs include funding levels equal to the average amount provided annually over the previous ten years, excluding the highest and lowest years, to account for years with unusually high or low disaster activity.

As disaster funding is already considered "no-year" money, unused monies would carry over to support years where additional funds are required. The status quo of Congress providing emergency appropriations to support these efforts, rather than including reasonable estimates, based on past disaster activity trends, is fiscally irresponsible. We should be working with the Administration to fund the necessary and appropriate activities of the Federal government, including disaster assistance. Responsible budgeting for disasters is the right thing to do for the victims of devastation, as the vivid images of the damage from Hurricane Irene have reminded us.

Hurricane Irene caused more than 4.5 million homes and businesses along the East Coast to lose power, including nearly 185,000 in my home State of Maine, which suffered flooding and washed out bridges in the Western portion of the state. But now that the winds and rain have subsided, our cities and towns must rebuild from the devastation.

With the Federal Emergency Management Agency's funding currently running unnecessarily low, they now must work on an "immediate needs funding" basis, meaning that non-emergency recovery projects are put on hold. Support of natural disaster recovery should not be stalled by the need for Emergency Supplemental Appropriations. While we cannot completely predict the number or nature of natural disasters, we do know that these events occur and cause massive damage. Policymakers cannot continue to play with the livelihoods of recovering Americans; assurances must be made that their recovery is facilitated through current Federal disaster recovery programs.

The Safeguarding Disaster Funding Act of 2011 will ensure that the President properly accounts for disaster

spending. By basing the President's budget request for disaster funding on a ten-year average, and excluding the highs and the lows, we are assuring that funds are neither overextended nor falsely underestimated. In these hard economic times, Congress must promote fiscal responsibility while ensuring that those areas struck by disasters are able to access the funds needed to quickly rebuild.

I hope that my fellow colleagues will support this bill. In the wake of recent disasters it is readily apparent that we must plan better for these events.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 1565. A bill to establish the National Competition for Community Renewal to encourage communities to adopt innovative strategies and design principles to programs related to poverty prevention, recovery and response, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today over 15 percent of Americans live in poverty including 22 percent of our children. 46.2 million Americans and 16.4 million children struggle every day to survive in a system that is demoralizing and unfortunately does more to maintain people who live in poverty than to help them escape. Last year, 2.6 million Americans were added to the poverty rolls and 8.9 million have been added since 2007.

This must change. That is why I am today reintroducing the National Opportunity and Community Renewal Act. This legislation puts forth some new ideas and will grant waivers to ten communities so they can test different approaches to combatting poverty. I am not saying this is the only path forward or the most suitable path forward. But we must begin somewhere and we must take a comprehensive approach. As Robert Kennedy once said when talking about tackling the poverty problem in our country, we must "grab the web whole." Piecemeal approaches won't work.

I know there are other Senators and Congressmen along with policy professionals and academics who share my concern and commitment to reducing poverty. I invite people to review this proposal. Let me know what you think and if you have other ideas to bring them to the table. It is long past time to reestablish our national commitment to the least fortunate.

We must also acknowledge that there is not one answer to helping people out of poverty. That is why this legislation is important. It will allow communities to pursue innovative approaches to problems arising from poverty and avoids a "one size fits all" method. This legislation also targets individuals and mandates the creation of an individual opportunity plan for every household. It also helps address the root causes of poverty by giving local communities to design programs that fit their community and they would not be restricted by the current law.

These pilots will help us test new ideas and understand how new approaches can help lift people out of poverty.

In closing, I should note it has been almost fifty years since Michael Harrington published *The Other America* and opened Americans eyes to the pernicious impact of poverty. While there have been improvements made in the ensuing years we still have a long way to go. Let us begin anew today.

By Mr. McCAIN:

S. 1570. A bill to provide for high-quality academic tutoring for low-income students, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, when poor children in low performing schools need help, what options are available to their parents to give them a chance to improve their learning achievement? Sadly, very few options exist to give children in low performing schools a chance.

I am pleased to introduce legislation that will protect and enhance the right of parents to have final say in their children's education. In order to create better outcomes for our nation's youth, we must restore power to parents. We must ensure that parents have real choices to raise their child's achievement level when schools fail to do so. The Tutoring for Students Act, furthers this critical goal by establishing a state-level grant program to give low-income parents the ability to provide their children high quality academic tutoring.

Low-income parents should have the same opportunities to help their children achieve as families with greater economic means.

Tutoring is as much a part of education in America as the yellow school bus or the neighborhood school building. If your child is struggling academically, and you have the financial means to do so, you get your child a tutor. Tutoring is time proven and common sense. Equally, while there are many ideas about how to improve education in America, one thing upon which everyone agrees plays a critical role in any child's education: the active involvement of their parents.

The Tutoring for Students Act encourages the active engagement of parents by giving them a say in helping their child's education. Parents can drive schools to apply for tutoring grants. Parents choose to enroll their children. Parents pick which tutoring provider they send their child to. Parents receive progress updates on their child.

For too long in this country the debate about education has been more about the institutions—the institution of powerful unions, the institution of the school bureaucracies. Make no mistake about it, strong leadership in the classroom and in school administration is important. However, education is not about protecting and preserving union contracts and the jobs of bureau-

crats. Education is about our children. If they aren't getting what they need in the classroom, we need to work with schools to help them improve. At the same time, we must provide students in struggling schools with the help they need to ensure they receive a quality education.

The foundation for success in education is setting high expectations for our schools and holding them accountable to develop our most precious resource—our children. Every child, no matter what their economics, deserves not only a chance, but has an absolute right, to a good education. If students can't get what they deserve in the classroom, then we must empower parents with educational support tools and the ability to make meaningful choices about what is best for their children.

When Congress passed No Child Left Behind, embedded in that landmark legislation were certain programs specifically designed to recognize the importance of parental empowerment and parental participation. Supplemental Education Services is a program specifically designed to give low-income families the ability to access educational support opportunities just like families with more financial freedom, to shop for the best tutoring services for their child.

Thoughtful education reform means building upon successes and lessons learned. We have learned a great deal since passage of No Child Left Behind. That includes our experience in providing tutoring services to low-income children. One of the most important lessons we learned is that tutoring works. In March, the U.S. Department of Education released a study stating that the tutoring program led to significant gains in math and reading student achievement. Studies by respected organizations like the Rand Corporation and school districts like the Chicago Public schools have come to similar conclusions.

Another important lesson from NCLB is the cynical lengths to which some low performing schools districts are willing to go in order to avoid accountability and deny parents the opportunity to access tutoring services for their children. Far too often these districts gamed the enrollment process for tutoring services, making it difficult, if not impossible for parents to exercise their right to take advantage of the SES program and get their children the educational support services—tutoring—they desperately needed. Similarly, due to poor oversight, there have been cases where tutors failed to meet their responsibility to provide high quality tutoring.

These problems are addressed in this legislation by establishing a state-administered grant program. Any school can elect to participate, allowing low-income parents with children attending participating schools to take advantage of high quality tutoring services. The Tutoring for Students Act requires

strict oversight of tutoring service providers, from certification to evaluation, in order to ensure that parents can rely upon qualified tutoring service providers to help their children.

I do not favor more Federal control over education. That is why the Tutoring for Students Act is not a Federal mandate. Rather, it is a guarantee that parents will have the right to stand up for their children and give them the opportunity for a better education and a better life. Empowering parents with the ability to positively impact their child's education is not a mandate. It is common sense. Freedom is not a Federal mandate. It is an individual right. The best use of Federal dollars in education is to make them more accessible to parents, empowering them to look out for the needs of their children. High quality tutoring is a common-sense, academic lifeline.

In my home State of Arizona, organizations like the Education Breakthrough Network to Literacy Volunteers of Tucson and the Arizona Chapter of Campfire USA have voiced their strong support. Nationwide, organizations such as the United Farm Workers of America, the National Urban League, the Commonwealth Foundation and the John Locke Institute continue to stand up for the rights of parents to have more tools and choices to help their children achieve. There is strong support for this program among communities across America, particularly among the parents who so often do not have a voice representing their needs and interests here in Washington.

I look forward to working with Senator ENZI, Senator HARKIN, and the rest of my colleagues to secure passage of meaningful education reform that includes protecting and strengthening the ability of parents to make educational choices for their children, choices that include high quality tutoring.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 268—RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE MALCOLM WALLOP, FORMER SENATOR FOR THE STATE OF WYOMING

Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. REID of Nevada, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COATS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELLER,