

EC-4052. A communication from the Director of the Regulation Policy and Management Office, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Clothing Allowance" (RIN2900—AN64) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2011; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-4053. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Alan S. Thompson, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4054. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to internal procedures and processes for addressing ongoing postmarket safety issues identified by the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology (OSE) and how recommendations of the OSE are handled within the Agency; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 1905. A bill to amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act to support crop insurance for specialty crops, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. RISCH):

S. 1906. A bill to modify the Forest Service Recreation Residence Program as the program applies to units of the National Forest System derived from the public domain by implementing a simple, equitable, and predictable procedure for determining cabin user fees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 1907. A bill to promote transparency by permitting the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board to allow its disciplinary proceedings to be open to the public, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. NELSON of Florida):

S. 1908. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the employment tax treatment and reporting of wages paid by professional employer organization, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ENZI:

S. 1909. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for the issuance of Buy Back America Bonds; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1910. A bill to provide benefits to domestic partners of Federal employees; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 1911. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide recruitment and retention incentives for volunteer emergency service workers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. McCAIN (for himself, Mr. COBURN, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 1912. A bill to prohibit the Department of Energy from subordinating its position in energy loan guarantees to outside investors; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. LANDRIEU:

S. 1913. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to prescribe regulations requiring air carriers to provide passengers with certain amenities and facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 1914. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit for performance based home energy improvements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. Res. 334. A resolution designating the week of November 6 through November 12, 2012, as "Veterans' Education Awareness Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Res. 335. A resolution honoring the life and legacy of Evelyn H. Lauder; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 336. A resolution to permit the collection of clothing, toys, food, and housewares during the holiday season for charitable purposes in Senate buildings; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 436

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 436, a bill to ensure that all individuals who should be prohibited from buying a firearm are listed in the national instant criminal background check system and require a background check for every firearm sale.

S. 626

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 626, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the shipping investment withdrawal rules in section 955 and to provide an incentive to reinvest foreign shipping earnings in the United States.

S. 810

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 810, a bill to prohibit the conducting of invasive research on great apes, and for other purposes.

S. 838

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 838, a bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to clarify the ju-

risdiction of the Environmental Protection Agency with respect to certain sporting good articles, and to exempt those articles from a definition under that Act.

S. 1277

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a co-sponsor of S. 1277, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the incentives for the production of biodiesel.

S. 1591

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1591, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Raoul Wallenberg, in recognition of his achievements and heroic actions during the Holocaust.

S. 1597

At the request of Mr. BROWN of Ohio, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a co-sponsor of S. 1597, a bill to provide assistance for the modernization, renovation, and repair of elementary school and secondary school buildings in public school districts and community colleges across the United States in order to support the achievement of improved educational outcomes in those schools, and for other purposes.

S. 1680

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1680, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect and preserve access of Medicare beneficiaries in rural areas to health care providers under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1727

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a co-sponsor of S. 1727, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Navy to conduct a review of military service records of Jewish American veterans of World War I, including those previously awarded a military decoration, to determine whether any of the veterans should be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, and for other purposes.

S. 1776

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1776, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to expand the Operation Hero Miles program to include the authority to accept the donation of travel benefits in the form of hotel points or awards for free or reduced-cost accommodations.

S. 1817

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1817, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for

greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission.

S. 1822

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1822, a bill to provide for the exhumation and transfer of remains of deceased members of the Armed Forces buried in Tripoli, Libya.

S. 1868

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as co-sponsors of S. 1868, a bill to establish within the Smithsonian Institution the Smithsonian American Latino Museum, and for other purposes.

S. 1871

At the request of Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1871, a bill to prohibit commodities and securities trading based on nonpublic information relating to Congress, to require additional reporting by Members and employees of Congress of securities transactions, and for other purposes.

S. 1876

At the request of Mr. BROWN of Ohio, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1876, a bill to require the establishment of a Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers to compute cost-of-living increases for Social Security benefits under title II of the Social Security Act.

S. 1901

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1901, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the limitations on the amount excluded from the gross estate with respect to land subject to a qualified conservation easement.

S. 1903

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1903, a bill to prohibit commodities and securities trading based on nonpublic information relating to Congress, to require additional reporting by Members and employees of Congress of securities transactions, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1903, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 1067

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1067 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize ap-

propriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1068

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1068 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1071

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1071 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1072

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1072 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1084

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1084 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1115

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1115 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1116

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor

of amendment No. 1116 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1120

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1120 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1121

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1121 intended to be proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1138

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1138 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1158

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1158 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1159

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1159 intended to be proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1165

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1165 intended to be proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1179

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1179 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1180

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1180 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1188

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1188 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1197

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1197 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1200

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) were added as co-sponsors of amendment No. 1200 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe

military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1210

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1210 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1211

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1211 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1219

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, his name and the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1219 proposed to S. 1867, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 1907. A bill to promote transparency by permitting the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board to allow its disciplinary proceedings to be open to the public, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am introducing the PCAOB Enforcement Transparency Act of 2011 along with Senator GRASSLEY.

One of the largest securities frauds in history began unraveling in August 2001 when an Enron vice president expressed her concern that the company might “implode under a series of accounting scandals.” Enron disclosed a few months later that its historical financial statements were not accurate. A subsequent restatement revealed over that \$500 million in losses had gone unreported. Several other large corporate frauds followed shortly thereafter. For instance, in June 2002, WorldCom admitted that it had misrepresented its profitability to investors.

The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs conducted a series of hearings on the issues that

were raised by the revelations of Enron and other public companies. The hearings produced a remarkable consensus on a number of underlying causes, including weak corporate governance, a lack of accountability, and inadequate oversight of accountants charged with auditing a public company’s financial statements.

In order to address the gaps and structural weaknesses revealed by the investigation and hearings, Congress passed the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. The Senate passed this legislation on a 99 to 0 vote.

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act ensured that corporate officers were directly accountable for their financial reporting and for the quality of their financial statements. The new law also created a strong, independent board to oversee the conduct of the auditors of public companies, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, PCAOB or Board.

The board is responsible for overseeing auditors of public companies in order to protect investors and further the preparation of informative, accurate, and independent audit reports on the financial statements of public companies. The board operates under the oversight of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, SEC.

The PCAOB is responsible for setting auditing standards for auditors of public companies, for examining the quality of audits performed by public company auditors, and where necessary, for imposing disciplinary sanctions on registered auditors and auditing firms. The PCAOB oversees more than 2,400 registered auditing firms, as well as the thousands of audit partners and staff who contribute to a firm’s work on each audit.

The board’s ability to commence proceedings to determine whether there have been violations of its auditing standards or rules of professional practice is an important component of its oversight. In order to determine whether to institute a proceeding, the board’s enforcement staff conducts a nonpublic investigation and makes a recommendation to the five-member board.

However, unlike other oversight bodies, such as the SEC, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, FDIC, the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission, CFTC, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, FINRA, and others, the Board’s disciplinary proceedings are not allowed to be public.

Unfortunately, over the last several years, bad actors have been taking advantage of this lack of transparency. In April 2011, the Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment, which I chair, considered the issue of enhancing the PCAOB’s effectiveness by permitting the Board to disclose information about its enforcement proceedings. PCAOB Chairman James Doty noted that the “secrecy has a variety of unfortunate consequences” and