

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1308) to amend the Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission Act to extend the termination date for the Commission, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, there be no intervening action or debate, and that any statements related to this bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 1308) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

FOOD SAFETY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2011

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 21, S. 216.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 216) to increase criminal penalties for certain knowing and intentional violations relating to food that is misbranded or adulterated.

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

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Food Safety Accountability Act of 2011”.

SEC. 2. CRIMINAL PENALTIES.

Section 303(a) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 333(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “Any” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (2) or (3), any”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1) of this section, if” and inserting “If”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) Any person who violates subsection (a), (b), (c), or (k) of section 301 with respect to any food—

“(A) knowingly and intentionally to defraud or mislead; and

“(B) with conscious or reckless disregard of a risk of death or serious bodily injury,

shall be fined under title 18, United States Code, imprisoned for not more than 10 years, or both.”.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, the Senate will pass the Food Safety Accountability Act, an important bill to hold criminals who poison our food supply accountable for their crimes. I would like to thank Senators KLOBUCHAR, FRANKEN, DURBIN, FEINSTEIN, KOHL, and BLUMENTHAL for their support. Senators HATCH, SESSIONS, COBURN, and GRASSLEY had concerns

about the breadth of the bill, and we were able to work together to address those concerns. The bill received unanimous, bipartisan support when it was reported out of the Judiciary Committee, and I am pleased that it has now received similar support from the Senate. I urge the House to quickly take up the Senate bill and join us in taking this important step toward protecting our food supply.

The Food Safety Accountability Act increases the sentences that prosecutors can seek for people who violate our food safety laws in those cases where there is conscious or reckless disregard of a risk of death or serious bodily injury. Last summer, a salmonella outbreak caused hundreds of people to fall ill and triggered a national egg recall. The cause of the outbreak is still under investigation, but salmonella poisoning is all too common and sometimes results from inexcusable knowing conduct like that carefully targeted by the Food Safety Accountability Act.

In the last Congress, a mother from Vermont, Gabrielle Meunier, testified before the Senate Agriculture Committee about her 7-year-old son, Christopher, who became severely ill and was hospitalized for 6 days after he developed salmonella poisoning from peanut crackers 2 years ago. Thankfully, Christopher recovered, but Mrs. Meunier's story highlighted improvements that are needed in our food safety system. No parent should have to go through what Mrs. Meunier experienced. The American people should be confident that the food they buy for their families is safe.

Current statutes do not provide sufficient criminal sanctions for those who knowingly violate our food safety laws. Knowingly distributing adulterated food is already illegal, but it is merely a misdemeanor right now, and the Sentencing Commission has found that it generally does not result in jail time. The fines and recalls that usually result from criminal violations under current law fall short in protecting the public from harmful products. Too often, those who are willing to endanger our children in pursuit of profits view such fines or recalls as merely the cost of doing business.

The company responsible for the eggs at the root of the last summer's salmonella crisis has a long history of environmental, immigration, labor, and food safety violations. It is clear that fines are not enough to protect the public and effectively deter this unacceptable conduct. We need to make sure that those who knowingly poison the food supply will go to jail. This bill will help to do that. This bill significantly increases the chances that those who commit food safety crimes will face jail time, rather than a slap on the wrist, for their criminal conduct.

Food safety received considerable attention last year, and I was pleased that Congress finally passed comprehensive food safety reforms. But our

work is not done. On behalf of the hundreds of individuals sickened by recent salmonella outbreaks, I urge the House to quickly pass the Food Safety Accountability Act and join the Senate in continuing to improve our food safety system.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee 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 any statements related 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 bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The bill (S. 216), as amended, was passed.

HONORING AND SUPPORTING WOMEN IN NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 33, S. Res. 109.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 109) honoring and supporting women in North Africa and the Middle East whose bravery, compassion, and commitment to putting the wellbeing of others before their own have proven that courage can be contagious.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendments at the desk be agreed to, the resolution, as amended, be agreed to, the preamble, as amended, be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The amendments (Nos. 301 and 302) were agreed to, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 301

(Purpose: To amend the resolution)

On page 4, beginning on line 12, strike “, and supports” and all that follows through “these rights” on line 14.

AMENDMENT NO. 302

(Purpose: To amend the preamble)

In the ninth whereas clause of the preamble, strike “the United Nations Security Council and”.

The resolution (S. Res. 109), as amended, was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 109

Whereas, in the course of peaceful protests in countries throughout North Africa and

the Middle East, women have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with men to advance their rights;

Whereas Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has said, "The rights of women and girls is the unfinished business of the 21st Century.";

Whereas, in late December 2010 and January 2011, Tunisia underwent a political upheaval, dubbed the "Jasmine Revolution," resulting in the fleeing of President of Tunisia Zine El Abidine Ben Ali from the country on January 14, 2011;

Whereas one of the first voices of the "Jasmine Revolution" was the sister of Mohammad Bouazizi, the young man whose death led to many of the peaceful protests in Tunisia;

Whereas, on January 25, 2011, demonstrations began across Egypt with thousands of protesters peacefully calling for a new government, free and fair elections, significant constitutional and political reforms, greater economic opportunity, and an end to government corruption;

Whereas women in Egypt have utilized social media to galvanize support among men and women for peaceful protest;

Whereas huge crowds came out to protest peacefully in Egypt, and women were among those that faced tear gas and who pitched their tents and slept in the cold in Tahrir Square;

Whereas hundreds of women took part in a rally in Cairo on March 8, 2011, the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day, to remind women in Egypt that they must have a voice in their nation's future;

Whereas, on February 25, 2011, the international community condemned the violence and use of force against civilians in Libya;

Whereas, according to press reports, women in Libya have been working behind the scenes making a profound difference to promote reform and keep the momentum of the uprising alive, listening to worried fathers whose sons are fighting on the frontlines, keeping up with the day-to-day clashes and casualty numbers, and holding meetings about health and education issues, as well as participating in the demonstrations themselves;

Whereas, according to press reports, women are among the leaders of demonstrations calling for reform in Yemen;

Whereas women's groups in countries such as Morocco, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iran have attempted to harness critical support regarding legislation affecting their rights;

Whereas women around the world continue to face significant obstacles in all aspects of their lives, including denial of basic human rights, discrimination, and gender-based violence;

Whereas women, young and old, have marched in the streets of countries from Tunisia to Iran demanding freedom from oppression; and

Whereas women across North Africa and the Middle East aspire for freedom, democracy, and rule of law: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the women in North Africa and the Middle East who have worked to ensure that women are guaranteed equality and basic human rights;

(2) recognizes that the empowerment of women is inextricably linked to the potential of nations to generate economic growth and sustainable democracy;

(3) acknowledges that women in North Africa and the Middle East are demanding to be included in making choices that will affect their own lives and their families;

(4) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to the universal rights of freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, and

freedom of association, including via the Internet;

(5) celebrates this year's centennial anniversary of International Women's Day, a global day to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women past, present, and future, and a day to recognize the obstacles that women still face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities;

(6) condemns any efforts to provoke or instigate violence against women, and calls upon all parties to refrain from all violent and criminal acts; and

(7) underscores the vital importance of women's rights and political participation as leaders in North Africa and the Middle East consider constitutional reforms and shape new governments.

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 127, and the Senate proceed to the matter.

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. 127) designating April 2011 as "National Child Abuse Prevention Month."

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 127) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 127

Whereas in 2009, approximately 702,000 children were determined to be victims of abuse or neglect;

Whereas in 2009, an estimated 1,770 children died as a result of abuse or neglect;

Whereas in 2009, an estimated 80.8 percent of the children who died due to abuse or neglect were under the age of 4;

Whereas in 2009, of the children under the age of 4 who died due to abuse or neglect, 46.2 percent were under the age of 1;

Whereas abused or neglected children have a higher risk for developing health problems in adulthood, including alcoholism, depression, drug abuse, eating disorders, obesity, suicide, and certain chronic diseases;

Whereas a National Institute of Justice study indicated that abused or neglected children—

(1) are 11 times more likely to be arrested for criminal behavior as juveniles; and

(2) are 2.7 times more likely to be arrested for violent and criminal behavior as adults;

Whereas an estimated 1/3 of abused or neglected children grow up to abuse or neglect their own children;

Whereas providing community-based services to families impacted by child abuse or neglect may be far less costly than—

(1) the emotional and physical damage inflicted on children who have been abused or neglected;

(2) providing other services to abused or neglected children, including child protective, law enforcement, court, foster care, or health care services; or

(3) providing treatment to adults recovering from child abuse; and

Whereas child abuse and neglect have long-term economic and societal costs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2011 as "National Child Abuse Prevention Month";

(2) recognizes and applauds the national and community organizations that work to promote awareness about child abuse and neglect, including by identifying risk factors and developing prevention strategies;

(3) supports the proclamation issued by President Obama declaring April 2011 to be "National Child Abuse Prevention Month"; and

(4) should increase public awareness of prevention programs relating to child abuse and neglect, and continue to work with States to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect in the United States.

PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 35, S. Res. 128.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 128) expressing the sense of the Senate that public servants should be commended for their dedication and continued service to the Nation during Public Service Recognition Week, May 1 through 7, 2011.

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

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 128) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 128

Whereas Public Service Recognition Week provides an opportunity to recognize and promote the important contributions of public servants and honor the diverse men and women who meet the needs of the Nation through work at all levels of government;

Whereas millions of individuals work in government service in every city, county, and State across America and in hundreds of cities abroad;

Whereas public service is a noble calling involving a variety of challenging and rewarding professions;

Whereas Federal, State, and local governments are responsive, innovative, and effective because of the outstanding work of public servants;

Whereas the United States of America is a great and prosperous Nation, and public service employees contribute significantly to that greatness and prosperity;

Whereas the Nation benefits daily from the knowledge and skills of these highly trained individuals;