

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 cosponsors 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

this “state of affairs is not good for investors, for the auditing profession, or for the public at large.”

In one example, an accounting firm that was subject to a disciplinary proceeding continued to issue no fewer than 29 additional audit reports on public companies without any of those companies knowing about the PCAOB proceedings. Those public companies and their investors were completely in the dark about the board's decision to both institute disciplinary proceedings and about the progress of those proceedings. The auditor knew about the proceedings, but the investors and public companies were denied information that was arguably very relevant to the audit relationship.

There are additional reasons that the proceedings should be open and transparent. First, the closed proceedings run counter to the public proceedings of other oversight bodies, as I have already noted. Indeed, nearly all administrative proceedings brought by the SEC against public companies, brokers, dealers, investment advisers, and others are open, public proceedings.

The PCAOB's secret proceedings are not only shielded from the public, but from Congress as well. The public and Congress have a role in ensuring that not just auditors are held to account, but also that the PCAOB is held to account as well for its oversight of the auditors and audit firms.

Second, the incentive to litigate cases in order to continue to shield conduct from the public as long as possible frustrates the process and requires the expenditure of needless resources by both litigants and the PCAOB. In April, Chairman Doty, who testified before the Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment, noted that “the fact that PCAOB disciplinary proceedings are required to be secret creates a considerable incentive to litigate.”

Third, a recent academic study noted that the public nature of SEC's proceedings against companies result in good results. “Observing a public SEC enforcement action in its industry against a target firm is likely to increase a peer firm's knowledge about SEC activity and cause it to revise upward its subjective probability of attracting such an action against itself.” In effect, the study noted that this may serve as a deterrent to misconduct because of a perceived increase in “getting caught.” Accordingly, the audit industry would also benefit from timely, public, and non-secret enforcement proceedings.

Our bill will make hearings by the PCAOB, and all related notices, orders, and motions, open and available to the public unless otherwise ordered by the board. The board procedure would then be similar to the SEC's Rules of Practice for similar matters, where hearings and related notices, orders, and motions are open and available to the public.

We need to ensure public proceedings to better protect and serve companies

and investors. I hope our colleagues will join Senator GRASSLEY and me in taking the legislative steps necessary to enhance transparency in the PCAOB's enforcement process.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1907

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 “PCAOB Enforcement Transparency Act of 2011”.

SEC. 2. OPEN MEETINGS AUTHORIZED.

Section 105(c)(2) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (15 U.S.C. 7215(c)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) PUBLIC HEARINGS.—Hearings under this section shall be open to the public, unless the Board, on its own motion or after considering the motion of a party, orders otherwise.”.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF DETERMINATIONS.

Section 105(d)(1)(C) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (15 U.S.C. 7215(d)(1)(C)) is amended by striking “(once any stay on the imposition of such sanction has been lifted)”.

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.

Mr. ENZI. I rise today to introduce my Buy Back America Bonds bill, S. 1909. This bill will not only help raise awareness of our Nation's debt crisis, but it will also give every American the chance to be a part of the solution to fix our country's fiscal dilemma. My bill will allow Americans to invest in this incredible country and bring foreign-held U.S. debt back to American hands while at the same time reducing Federal Government spending. But before I talk about where my bill is going, I want to explain where I am coming from.

In World War II, war bonds were sold to help pay for our Nation's national defense and reduce the amount of debt incurred. People from all kinds of backgrounds saved toward purchasing war bonds, often with nickels, dimes, and quarters. On the job, people deducted the cost of war bonds from their meager paychecks. Families invested in war bonds and saved for the future. During World War II, President Roosevelt even asked the Boy Scouts of America to sell war bonds, and they did. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts worked with their packs and troops to sell bonds to their neighbors and communities. In other words, all across the country, folks of all walks and types were working together for one collective goal—to do their part for the country's war effort. Men, women, and children were selling and purchasing these war bonds, all in the name of lending a hand to our fellow countrymen and to pay for the costs of war.

I was born during World War II. When I was born, my parents bought me a

war bond. I still have that \$20 bond today. Not cashing it was my first gift to my country, and it is also a keepsake to me.

In 1941, when savings bonds were re-titled as “war bonds” in the terrible and devastating aftermath of Pearl Harbor, the United States rallied as a collective nation in support of the war and war bond effort. At the time, though, the average American only earned about \$2,000 a year. Despite these hardships and tough times, 134 million Americans were called on to be part of the war bond effort, and more than half of the U.S. population—85 million people—responded to the patriotic call to participate.

The Scouts raised money and personally donated their own funds 10 cents at a time in the form of stamps that could be pasted into a war bond booklet. When war bond books were complete, they could be taken to the local bank, and sometimes even the local post office, to purchase bonds. One innovative group even created a promotional cardboard with slots for 75 quarters that had to be filled before it could be redeemed for a bond.

Showing his leadership and dedication to the effort, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt purchased the very first war bond issued. In part of President Roosevelt's April 30, 1941, radio address to the American people, he said:

One thought is uppermost in my mind as I make grateful acknowledgment of this dual honor. It is that in reserving the first Defense Savings Bond and the first Defense Postal Savings Stamps in the name of the President, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Postmaster General have given emphasis to the national character of this defense savings campaign. This character of the campaign is national in the best sense of the word, for it is going to reach down, we hope, to the individual and the family in every community and on every farm, in every State and every possession of the United States.

The President goes on to say:

It is national and it is homey at the same time. For example, I am buying not one stamp but ten stamps each to go into a little book for each of my ten grandchildren. And the first savings bond is being made out in the name of Mrs. Roosevelt as beneficiary.

It is fitting that the President in his purchases should be a sort of a symbol of the determination of all the people to save and sacrifice in defense of democracy. In a larger sense, this first defense bond and these first defense stamps sold to the President constitute tangible evidence of a partnership—a partnership between all of the people and their Government—entered into to safeguard and perpetuate all of those precious freedoms which Government guarantees. In this time of national peril, what we all must realize is that the United States Government is you and I and all other families next door all the way across the country and back again. It is one great partnership.

That ends the quote from President Roosevelt.

The President concluded his address by asking his fellow Americans to demonstrate their faith in America by investing in the new defense bonds and stamps.

I remember as a child bringing dimes to school so that I could purchase a stamp for my savings bond book—one stamp at a time, saving toward the price of a full savings bond. I remember vividly that the bond was a lofty \$18.75. When I got my book filled, we could go down to the bank so that I could finally trade for my bond—that piece of paper showing that I had done my small part to help in the effort and make this country better. Kids of my generation learned the value of saving and helping their country through the savings bond program.

Today, I rise to speak about a different sort of fight, and yet, at the same time, this fight is one that is no less serious than the one I remember as a child. Today, our Nation is struggling to fight a growing spending problem and a debt crisis. Debt is our problem now.

It is time to get all of America involved, not with a promise of wealth but with a sense of investing in our country, of buying America back, pulling us back from the brink of bankruptcy to other countries. The national debt stands at \$15 trillion, which breaks down to nearly \$48,000 for every person in our entire country. These figures are a frightening reminder that we cannot continue to put off the tough choices and that we must restore the fiscal discipline to the Federal Government.

This is a tough fight that has to be tackled on all fronts. Today I am proposing a step in the right direction and calling upon Americans for support of this effort. I am proposing that we bring American debt back to American hands. I am introducing the Buy Back America Bonds, S. 1909. My bill would buy back American bonds to American citizens in affordable \$25 increments so every American can afford to invest and do their part. The Treasury would then use the funds from these bonds to begin paying down the \$4.4 trillion in foreign-held U.S. debt. Investing in Buy Back America Bonds would allow Americans to show their patriotism and faith in this great Nation.

Unlike the war bonds of my childhood, Buy Back America Bonds would create a new series of savings bonds which are indexed for inflation as well as earning a fixed interest rate. By tying Buy Back America Bonds to inflation, we ensure the buying power of consumers' investments remains the same while also earning them additional interest. These could be called Gold Standard Bonds.

Those are two ways the Buy Back America Bonds would earn and keep their value for investors in addition to their patriotic and symbolic investment. These are not going to be barnburner investments, but they will help our Nation not only pay down our debt but pay down the amount of debt owed to foreign nations.

What makes this bill particularly special is that for every bond purchased, citizens are also helping the

Federal Government to reduce spending. Every year after the first year the amount of Buy Back America Bonds sold would be tallied and that exact amount would then be cut from Federal spending the following year.

I stand before you to explain not only where I am coming from with my Buy Back America Bonds but also why our Nation needs a collective effort to rally around to make steps toward a more responsible Federal budget and getting our national debt under control. Investing in America and bringing foreign-held debt back to American hands is where I propose to start. I ask my colleagues and the American people to help me be an integral part of the debt crisis solution.

Not only am I a father, I am a grandfather, and I want to be the first to purchase Buy Back America Bonds for my four grandchildren. I want my grandchildren and yours to have every opportunity for a great quality of life, to know the meaning of faith and investment in a prosperous United States. I am doing everything I can to ensure that happens. That means proposing solutions to problems and working to get my colleagues on board.

So I rise and ask for the support of my colleagues for this great effort and support for S. 1909, my Buy Back America Bonds bill. What President Roosevelt said then is equally true now:

In this time of national peril we must realize the U.S. Government is you and I, and all other families next door all the way across the country and back again. It is one great partnership.

Working together we can solve all of this. We need to solve all of this. We need to start solving it right now and this is one way to do it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1909

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

SECTION 1. BUY BACK AMERICA BONDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 31 of subtitle III of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 3105 the following new section:

“§3105a. Buy Back America Bonds

“(a) The Secretary shall establish and administer a new series of United States savings bonds, to be known as ‘Buy Back America Bonds’. Proceeds from the bonds shall be used first solely to reduce the amount of foreign-held public debt, and then to reduce other public debt.

“(b) A Buy Back America Bond shall be subject to such terms and conditions of issue, conversion, redemption, and maturation as the Secretary may prescribe, except that a Buy Back America Bond shall not mature, and may not be redeemed by the holder, earlier than 10 years from the date of issue and shall mature not more than 20 years from the date of issue. Interest on a Buy Back America Bond whenever paid shall not be includible in gross income under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(c) Buy Back America Bonds shall be issued at face value and in denominations of not less than \$25.

“(d) The redemption value of a Buy Back America Bond shall be determined as the Secretary shall provide—

“(1) at a fixed interest rate equal to the rate applicable to a Series I savings bond for the rate period during which the Buy Back America Bond is purchased, and

“(2) for purposes of calculating yearly interest, by increasing the purchase price of such Buy Back America Bond in each calendar year after the year of purchase by an amount equal to—

“(A) such purchase price, multiplied by

“(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for such calendar year, determined by substituting the calendar year in which such bond was purchased for ‘1992’ in subparagraph (B) thereof.

“(e) If during any fiscal year during which any Buy Back America Bond is outstanding—

“(1) the Federal budget deficit for such fiscal year is less than the amount equal to 3 percent of gross domestic product (as most recently computed and published by the Department of Commerce); and

“(2) the public debt is less than the amount equal to 10 percent of gross domestic product (as so computed and published); then any such bond may be redeemed without regard to subsection (b).

“(f) A Buy Back America Bond may only be held by—

“(1) a citizen or resident of the United States;

“(2) a domestic partnership, or domestic corporation, not more than 1 percent of the ownership interest of which is held (directly or indirectly) by a person who is not a United States person (as defined in section 7701(a)(30) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986); or

“(3) an estate or trust which is a United States person (as so defined), unless there is a beneficiary of the trust who is not a United States person (as so defined),

and may be purchased only by an individual who provides a valid social security account number (not including a taxpayer identification number provided by the Internal Revenue Service).

“(g) A Buy Back America Bond may be transferred as provided by the Secretary, but only to an individual who has a valid social security account number (not including a taxpayer identification number provided by the Internal Revenue Service).”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections subchapter I of chapter 31 of subtitle III of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 3105 the following new item:

“3105. Buy Back America Bonds.”.

SEC. 2. DEFICIT REDUCTION.

(a) CALCULATION.—The Office of Management and Budget shall calculate the net deficit reduction resulting from the implementation of this Act and the sale of Buy Back America Bonds for the period beginning on the date of the sale of the first such Buy Back America Bond and ending on the date that is 1 year after such date.

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF THE DISCRETIONARY CAPS.—Effective on the effective date of this Act, the limit for the appropriate discretionary budget category set forth in section 251(c) and 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 for the first fiscal year beginning after the date that is 1 year after the date of the sale of the first Buy Back America Bond shall be reduced by the amount of the net deficit reduction calculated pursuant to subsection (a).

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.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Volunteer Emergency Services Recruitment and Retention Act of 2011. This bill fixes a long-standing problem with the tax code that harms the ability of volunteer fire departments to recruit and retain both firefighter and emergency service personnel.

For years, local and state governments have provided their volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel with different forms of benefits including Length of Service Award Plans, commonly known as LOSAPs. These are pension-like benefits for volunteer emergency responders.

Unfortunately, the way the tax code handles LOSAPs hinders departments' abilities to administer the plans and makes it more difficult for volunteer emergency personnel to receive the benefits.

My bill would simplify the taxation of LOSAPs in two steps. First, it would allow LOSAPs to be elected as deferred compensation plans, and second, it would exempt them from the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974. This bill makes these necessary changes, which will improve access to LOSAP benefits for volunteer emergency responders, without increasing federal spending.

Today, an estimated 180,000 volunteer firefighters across 27 states participate in some form of LOSAP. Many states that do not offer these benefits would be more likely to do so if the federal tax code were simplified. This, in turn, would help volunteer fire departments to more easily recruit and retain personnel. These men and women our local first responders—are the foundation of our emergency response capabilities.

These volunteers put their lives on the line to help protect our communities, and their spirit of selflessness and service should be rewarded. I am proud to introduce this legislation with Senators SCHUMER and BLUMENTHAL, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this bill through the Senate and into law.

Mr. President, I would ask for unanimous consent that a letter of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MAINE FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION,

Augusta Maine, November 8, 2011.

Re "Volunteer Emergency Services Recruitment and Retention Act of 2011."

Hon. SUSAN M. COLLINS,
Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COLLINS: The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association is a 425 member organization that represents fire and EMS services in every county in the State of Maine. The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association is charged with regularly advising the Legislature and

the Governor and providing recommendations regarding necessary changes to Maine's fire service system. The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association represents numerous fire and emergency service interests in Maine. Members of the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association represent fulltime, call and volunteer firefighters.

The recruitment and retention of experienced emergency responders is a priority of the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association and Maine's fire service. The majority of Maine's fire departments rely on call and/or volunteer firefighters and the recruitment and retention of these crucial volunteers is the number one issue facing the volunteer fire service today. Length of Service Award Programs (LOSAPs)—pension-like programs for volunteer emergency responders—are effective recruitment and retention tools and are quite popular among the volunteer fire service.

In 2009, the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association proposed the following legislation—L.D. 1499 "An Act To Establish the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission Length of Service Award Program"—offering a LOSAP to emergency responders in Maine. Although there was support for the bill's concept during the public hearing process, members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee cited the potential problems associated with the present federal tax laws—specifically that the Internal Revenue Code, Section 457, does not include LOSAPs—and L.D. 1499 ultimately was not passed. Federal legislation—H.R. 1792—was proposed in the 111th Congress but was not passed before adjournment. H.R. 376 "Volunteer Emergency Services Recruitment and Retention Act of 2011" was submitted earlier this year in the House of Representatives and sponsorship of similar legislation in the Senate is anticipated.

The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association respectfully requests your sponsorship of this important legislation for emergency responders. Length of service award programs are important recruitment and retention tools for communities who primarily rely on volunteers. By clarifying the tax treatment of LOSAPs, local communities will find it easier to establish and administer these programs. H.R. 376 would not create new LOSAPs, place additional requirements on existing LOSAPs or require communities to provide LOSAPs to their volunteer emergency responders. LOSAPs would create incentives for firefighters to remain in the fire service and encourage new members to join the fire service. The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association joins the Fire Commission, the Maine State Federation of Firefighters, and many Maine fire departments in thanking you for similar senate sponsorship.

The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association thanks you for your strong support of the fire service and consideration of this important issue. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal and other fire service issues at your convenience.

Respectfully,

CHIEF STEPHEN NICHOLS,

President,

Maine Fire Chiefs' Association.

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.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise to speak about bipartisan legislation I am introducing today, the Cut Energy Bills at Home Act, which would provide

a 30 percent tax credit for Americans to cut their energy bills, and catalyze our construction industry, reduce pollution, and seize the opportunity in residential energy efficiency to secure America's energy future. With heating oil prices at \$3.94 nationally for home heating oil, a record for this time of year, this legislation is a timely method to address what may be the most expensive heating season in history.

I am pleased to have developed this bill with Senators BINGAMAN and FEINSTEIN, two longtime leaders on energy efficiency, and look forward to discussing this bill with my colleagues on the Senate Finance Committee. The Cut Energy Bills at Home Act recognizes the sea-change that has occurred in the energy efficiency industry and tries to ensure that middle-class Americans can harness these technological strides in their own lives.

Specifically, not only have windows, insulation, and boilers become more advanced to reduce energy consumption, but our contractors who perform this work have developed sophisticated practices to holistically improve a home's energy consumption.

In the past, homeowners would simply place insulation in the attic to contain heat, now companies are using infrared thermography to identify temperature differences in a house, a blower door test to measure airflow leaks, to replace windows, doors, and insulation that will maximize the cost-effectiveness of home energy efficiency improvements.

Today, we are on the cusp of a milestone turn in the energy efficiency industry—one with benefits for homeowners unimaginable even just five years ago. To spur early adoption of these advances and to ensure that cost is not prohibitive, our bill provides a 30 percent tax credit up to \$5,000 to assist homeowners who make an investment that will reduce energy costs for not only this winter, but for future years to come.

For example, under this bill if a homeowner invests in energy efficiency that will reduce heating oil consumption from 1,000 gallons of home heating oil to 800 gallons, a 20 percent improvement, the individual may claim 30 percent of the cost of the improvements as a tax credit up to \$2,000.

In 2009, New England consumed 3.4 billion gallons of home heating oil, which is approximately \$13 billion that households spent simply to keep warm. A 20 percent reduction in this figure would yield a savings of \$2.6 billion for households in New England. Energy efficiency can provide a critical tool to reduce this amount and allow households to invest in food, medicine, and the American economy. I urge my colleagues to support me in passing this legislation into law.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 334—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 6 THROUGH NOVEMBER 12, 2012, AS “VETERANS EDUCATION AWARENESS WEEK.”

Mr. MENENDEZ submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 334

Whereas brave men and women throughout the history of the United States have served with honor in the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas since President Franklin Roosevelt signed the first GI Bill, the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (58 Stat. 284, chapter 268), the Federal Government has provided Federal aid to help veterans readjust to civilian life, including financial assistance for tuition, books, and supplies, and other fees for education;

Whereas by the time the first GI Bill expired on July 25, 1956, approximately 7,800,000 of the 16,000,000 World War II veterans had participated in an education or training program by using benefits provided through the GI Bill;

Whereas recognizing the educational needs for a new generation of veterans, Congress passed and President Bush signed the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (38 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.) to provide educational benefits for veterans who have served in the United States Armed Forces since September 11, 2001;

Whereas the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 provides educational benefits for veterans, including active duty Army National Guard and Army Reserve members that significantly reduce the cost of attending college;

Whereas according to the Census Bureau, employees with an associate degree earn 26.3 percent more than employees with only a high school diploma and employees with a bachelor degree earn 87.4 percent more than employees with only a high school diploma;

Whereas making postsecondary education and job training available is critical to creating access to opportunity in the economy of the 21st century;

Whereas the lack of awareness of available educational benefits, or how to attain them, can deter veterans from seeking postsecondary education;

Whereas according to a survey conducted by the American Council on Education during the first year after the date of enactment of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, 38 percent of survey respondents reported having difficulty understanding and choosing the best education benefits for their needs; and

Whereas Veterans’ Education Awareness Week is an appropriate time to make veterans across the United States aware of the valuable information that they can access through organizations such as Operation College Promise, which provides ongoing updates on transitional assistance for military-affiliated students: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates the week of November 6 through November 12, 2012, as “Veterans’ Education Awareness Week” to raise public awareness about—

(1) the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008;

(2) the educational benefits to which veterans are entitled; and

(3) the resources available to help veterans maximize educational benefits under the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008.

SENATE RESOLUTION 335—HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF EVELYN H. LAUDER

Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 335

Whereas with the passing of Evelyn H. Lauder, the world has lost an energetic and dedicated friend and ally who catapulted to the world stage the quest to prevent and cure breast cancer in this lifetime;

Whereas Evelyn was born Evelyn Hausner on August 12, 1936, in Vienna, Austria;

Whereas in 1940, the Hausner family fled Nazi-occupied Austria, eventually settling in the State of New York, where Evelyn was a proud product of the New York City public school system and met her future husband of more than half a century, Leonard Lauder;

Whereas Evelyn and Leonard wed in July 1959;

Whereas, Evelyn joined the family cosmetic company, Estée Lauder, handling many roles in the early years and later becoming Senior Corporate Vice President and Head of Fragrance Development Worldwide;

Whereas Evelyn helped bring global awareness to breast cancer after being diagnosed with early stages of the disease in 1987;

Whereas in 1989, Evelyn initiated the fundraising drive to establish the Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Cancer Center at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, which opened in 1992 and quickly became the model for similar breast cancer diagnostic centers around the world;

Whereas the expanded Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Cancer Center opened in 2009 and provides the most up-to-date breast cancer prevention, diagnosis, and outpatient treatment services under 1 roof;

Whereas in 1992, Evelyn worked with longtime friend Alexandra Penney, former editor-in-chief of SELF magazine, to create the Pink Ribbon Campaign for breast cancer;

Whereas Evelyn launched the Estée Lauder Companies’ Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign, which has distributed more than 115,000,000 pink ribbons worldwide;

Whereas in 1993, Evelyn founded The Breast Cancer Research Foundation, thereby affirming her commitment to preventing breast cancer and finding a cure in this lifetime through funding some of the most innovative clinical and translation research at leading medical centers worldwide;

Whereas The Breast Center Research Foundation, which to date funds 186 researchers around the world and has raised \$350,000,000, has grown to become the largest national organization dedicated exclusively to funding research relating to the causes, treatment and prevention of breast cancer;

Whereas during Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October 2010, Evelyn and the Estée Lauder Companies’ Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign achieved a first-ever Guinness World Record, “Most Landmarks Illuminated for a Cause in 24 Hours”, by illuminating 38 iconic landmarks, including the Taj Mahal, the Tokyo Tower, the Hotel Majestic, the Empire State Building, and Niagara Falls;

Whereas in October 2011, the Lauder family was honored with the prestigious Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy for commitment to philanthropic endeavors and public service;

Whereas Evelyn will be remembered for her vision and leadership in achieving funding for promising scientific research that lead to breakthrough drugs, including Herceptin and Avastin, a better understanding of how tumors develop and risk fac-

tors for recurrence, and an improved quality of life for breast cancer survivors;

Whereas her work continues to help promising scientists who have equally promising, imaginative, and innovative proposals get research off the ground;

Whereas there is no doubt that we must find a cure, and research is instrumental to achieving this goal;

Whereas this year, nearly 40,000 women of the United States are expected to die of breast cancer; and

Whereas we must keep up the battle and recruit more heroes like Evelyn if we are to achieve “prevention and a cure in our lifetime”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) mourns the loss of Evelyn H. Lauder;

(2) honors the life and accomplishments of Evelyn H. Lauder, a world renowned advocate for breast cancer awareness and health of women; and

(3) offers the deepest condolences to the beloved husband, Leonard, sons, William and Gary, and 5 grandchildren of Evelyn H. Lauder.

SENATE RESOLUTION 336—TO PERMIT THE COLLECTION OF CLOTHING, TOYS, FOOD, AND HOUSEWARES DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSES IN SENATE BUILDINGS

Mr. REID of Nevada (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 336

Resolved,

SECTION 1. COLLECTION OF CLOTHING, TOYS, FOOD, AND HOUSEWARES DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSES IN SENATE BUILDINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of the rules or regulations of the Senate—

(1) a Senator, officer of the Senate, or employee of the Senate may collect from another Senator, officer of the Senate, or employee of the Senate within Senate buildings nonmonetary donations of clothing, toys, food, and housewares for charitable purposes related to serving persons in need or members of the Armed Services and the families of those members during the holiday season, if the charitable purposes do not otherwise violate any rule or regulation of the Senate or of Federal law; and

(2) a Senator, officer of the Senate, or employee of the Senate may work with a non-profit organization with respect to the delivery of donations described under paragraph (1).

(b) EXPIRATION.—The authority provided by this resolution shall expire at the end of the first session of the 112th Congress.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1227. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1867, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1228. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended