

WESTERN HEMISPHERE, PEACE CORPS, AND GLOBAL NARCOTICS AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 17, 2011, at 2 p.m., to hold a Western Hemisphere, Peace Corps, and Global Narcotics Affairs subcommittee hearing entitled, "U.S. Policy toward Latin America."

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

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, in just a moment, I will ask the body for unanimous consent to adopt S. Res. 60. Before I do, I wish to talk about the significance of this agreement we have come to on this important resolution.

Fifty years ago last September, President Eisenhower signed into law legislation that established real estate investment trusts, or REITs, as an investment opportunity for all investors. Prior to 1960, access to the highly desirable investment returns of commercial real estate assets was limited to institutions and wealthy individuals that had the financial wealth to make direct real estate investments. By creating REITs, Congress recognized that small investors should be afforded the same opportunity to invest in portfolios of large-scale commercial properties and achieve the same investment benefits—diversification, liquidity, performance, transparency—as those able to make direct investments in real estate.

Some of my colleagues may not be familiar with each REIT property in their States, but they should be aware that these properties are making a significant contribution to the economic vitality of their State and our Nation. REITs are companies dedicated to the ownership and development of income producing real estate, such as apartments, regional malls, shopping centers, office buildings, self storage facilities and industrial warehouses. They operate under an intricate set of tax rules that require them to, among other things, meet specific tests regarding the composition of their gross income and assets, in order to stay in business. For example, Federal tax law requires that 95 percent of a REIT's annual gross income must be from specified sources such as dividends, interests and rents, and 75 percent of the gross income must be from real estate related sources. Similarly, at the end of each calendar quarter, 75 percent of a REIT's assets must consist of specified "real estate" assets. Consequently, REITs must derive a majority of their gross income from commercial real estate. And, the REIT rules require that at least 90 percent of a REIT's total income must be returned to the company's shareholders in the form of dividends.

While REITs have played a major role in the U.S. economy since 1960, their mark in the investing world has primarily been achieved since passage of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, a time period many refer to as the "Modern REIT Era." This law removed most of the tax-sheltering capability of real estate and emphasized income producing transactions, allowing REITs to operate and manage real estate as well as own it. I am pleased that over the years, Congress has adopted legislation to perfect the REIT method of investing in real estate. Among many proposals, these include the REIT Simplification Act of 1997, the REIT Modernization Act of 1999, the REIT Improvement Act of 2004, and the REIT Investment Diversification and Empowerment Act passed in 2008.

REIT executives are hard-working business men and women who are singularly focused on bringing increased value to their shareholders. According to the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts, NAREIT, which is also celebrating its golden anniversary, these executives have proven to be successful in this objective, especially in the past two years in the wake of the financial downturn. Indeed, the vision of Congress has come to fruition: the equity market capitalization of REITs at the end of 2010 was \$389 billion, up from only \$1.5 billion at the end of 1971, and listed REITs distributed \$13.5 billion to shareholders in 2009.

I am pleased to be joined by my colleague, Senator MIKULSKI, who is a co-sponsor of this legislation, and I am pleased that my home state of Georgia is headquarters to several REIT companies that are engaged in the daily business of creating wealth and employment for many investors across the country and my constituents. These companies include Cousins Properties Incorporated, Gables Residential Trust, Piedmont Office Realty Trust, Incorporated, Post Properties, Incorporated, and Wells Real Estate Investment Trust. In total, there are more than 1400 REIT properties located in Georgia, with an estimated historical cost in the billions of dollars.

Commercial real estate represents more than 6 percent of this country's gross domestic product and is a key generator of jobs and other economic activities. Today, because of the foresight that Congress had 5 decades ago, anyone can purchase shares of real estate operating companies, and do so in a manner that meets their investments needs by focusing on a particular sector in the commercial real estate world and a specific region of the country. That is the beauty of the REIT method of investing, whose influence has now spread abroad to more than 2 dozen countries that have adopted a similar model encouraging real estate investment.

I again congratulate the REIT industry on this momentous occasion of their 50 years of leadership in the real

estate investing market. REITs have fulfilled Congress' vision by making investments in large scale, capital intensive commercial real estate available to all investors. I thank my colleagues for supporting this resolution, and I look forward to continuing to work with them on issues of importance to REIT investors.

With that, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 60, which was submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 60) recognizing the 50th anniversary of the date of enactment of the law that created real estate investment trusts (REITs) and gave millions of Americans new investment opportunities that helped them build a solid foundation for retirement and has contributed to the overall strength of the economy of the United States.

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

Mr. ISAKSON. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 60) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 60

Whereas, on September 14, 1960, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed into law Public Law 86-779 (74 Stat. 998), which enabled the establishment of real estate investment trusts (referred to in this preamble as "REITs") throughout the United States under regulations set by the Federal Government;

Whereas the enactment of this law enabled REITs to provide all investors with the same opportunity to invest in large-scale commercial real estate that previously was open only to large financial institutions and wealthy individuals through direct investment in that real estate;

Whereas REITs have placed within the reach of the average American investor large-scale commercial real estate investment through publicly traded, regulated securities, which provide investors with transparency and liquidity;

Whereas REITs, by expanding the opportunity to invest in commercial real estate, a separate and distinct asset class important to the creation of balanced investment portfolios, have enabled millions of Americans to gain the benefits of dividend-based income, portfolio diversification, and improved overall investment performance;

Whereas REITs have helped millions of Americans successfully invest for their retirements throughout the 50 years preceding the date of agreement to this resolution; and

Whereas September 14, 2010, marked the 50th anniversary of the date of enactment of the law that created the REIT investment opportunity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes the 50th anniversary of the date of enactment of the law that created real estate investment trusts (REITs) and the enhanced opportunities for investment and retirement security that have been afforded to Americans from

all walks of life as a result of this landmark law.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

MAKING A TECHNICAL AMENDMENT TO THE EDUCATION SCIENCES REFORM ACT OF 2002

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 12, S. 365.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 365) to make a technical amendment to the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002.

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

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

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

The bill (S. 365) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 365

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

SECTION 1. TECHNICAL AMENDMENT TO EDUCATION SCIENCES REFORM ACT OF 2002.

Section 174(e)(1)(A) of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9564(e)(1)(A)) is amended by inserting “, subject to 1 extension of not more than 12 months, at the Secretary’s discretion, for any contract in effect on, or entered into after, January 1, 2011” after “period”.

W. CRAIG BROADWATER FEDERAL BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Environment and Public Works Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 307 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 307) to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 217 West King Street, Martinsburg, West Virginia, as the “W. Craig Broadwater Federal Building and United States Courthouse.”

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

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

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

The bill (S. 307) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 307

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The Federal building and United States courthouse located at 217 West King Street, Martinsburg, West Virginia, shall be known and designated as the “W. Craig Broadwater Federal Building and United States Courthouse”.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Federal building and United States courthouse referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the “W. Craig Broadwater Federal Building and United States Courthouse”.

SAM D. HAMILTON NOXUBEE WILDLIFE REFUGE

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be discharged from further consideration of S. 266 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 266) to redesignate the Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge as the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge.

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

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (S. 266) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 266

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

SECTION 1. REDESIGNATION OF THE NOXUBEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, located in the State of Mississippi, is redesignated as the “Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge”.

(b) BOUNDARY REVISION.—Nothing in this Act prevents the Secretary of the Interior from making adjustments to the boundaries of the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge (referred to in this section as the “Refuge”), as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, to carry out the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System in accordance with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.) and any other applicable authority.

(c) ADDITION OF LAND.—Nothing in this Act prevents the Secretary of the Interior from adding to the Refuge new land or parcels of the National Wildlife Refuge System, as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, to carry out the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System in accordance with the

National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.) and any other applicable authority.

(d) REFERENCES.—Any reference in any statute, rule, regulation, executive order, publication, map, paper, or other document of the United States to the Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge is deemed to refer to the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration en bloc of the following resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 72, S. Res. 73, S. Res. 74, S. Res. 75, and S. Res. 76.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. RES. 72

(Recognizing the artistic and cultural contributions of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the 50th Anniversary of the first performance of Alvin Ailey’s masterwork, “Revelations”)

Whereas Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is recognized as one of the world’s great dance companies;

Whereas Congress has recognized the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater as one of our Nation’s most important cultural ambassadors;

Whereas at the age of 29, founder Alvin Ailey first premiered the dance work, *Revelations*, on January 31, 1960, at the famed 92nd Street Y in New York City;

Whereas *Revelations* is set to spirituals and draws inspiration from Ailey’s memories as a child growing up in Texas, and from the work of African-American writers such as James Baldwin and Langston Hughes;

Whereas since its premiere, *Revelations* has been seen by more than 23 million theatergoers, in 71 countries, and on 6 continents, making it the most widely seen works of modern dance;

Whereas *Revelations* was performed in front of a worldwide audience as part of the opening ceremonies of the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City;

Whereas *Revelations* has been performed for 5 U.S. Presidents, including at the inaugurations of President Carter in 1977 and President Clinton in 1993;

Whereas *Revelations* captures the faith and perseverance of the African-American people, and has influenced, and was influenced by, African-American cultural heritage and the social fabric of the United States; and

Whereas *Revelations* is beloved by people around the world, and its universal themes illustrate the strength and humanity within all of us: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate honors the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater as it celebrates the 50th anniversary of the dance work *Revelations*.