

PRE ED, will provide needed relief for early educators and encourage more to work with kids through age five. Well-trained educators providing quality early education to our children makes all the difference in a child's success.

Third, we need to reward companies offering onsite or near-site childcare with a company cost-share. We know it works for the company and for the employee—just look around our state.

In Alaska BP, Credit Union One and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital are great examples. They all offer quality onsite centers. They know it makes more productive employees.

The Child Care Public-Private Partnership Act will establish a program to provide child care through partnerships. Through new grant incentives for small and medium companies, we can help more Alaska companies do the same.

This package of bills, the KIDS Act, is not a new idea, and I appreciate my colleagues who have come before this body with similar proposals. However, this is the time to pass these bills—for working families struggling to make ends meet. Parents should have access to affordable, high-quality early care and learning services, early childhood educators should have liveable wages and benefits and business will be more productive.

In closing, let me say I feel very privileged to be involved with policy discussions and the formation of bills such as these. This is a bipartisan issue. I strongly encourage my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring these bills and I urge their quick action and approval.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 391—CON-DEMNING VIOLENCE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA AGAINST JOURNALISTS, AND EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN SYRIA

Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. LAUTENBERG) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 391

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1738 (2006) obliges states to ensure the safety of journalists in war zones;

Whereas, since the uprisings in Syria began in January 2011, the Government of Syria has denied entry to foreign journalists and arrested, abducted, beaten, tortured, and killed journalists, photographers, and bloggers to prevent the free flow of accurate information to the outside world;

Whereas restrictions imposed by the Government of Syria on media have made it extraordinarily difficult to verify death tolls and the exact nature and course of events within the country;

Whereas Syrian state media reports differ significantly from the few independent reports that make their way out of Syria;

Whereas Reporters Without Borders, an international nongovernmental organization that advocates freedom of the press and freedom of information, has listed Bashar al-Assad as a Predator of Freedom of the Press;

Whereas the League of Arab States called for the media to be allowed into Syria during its monitoring mission that was suspended indefinitely on January 28, 2012, due to the "critical deterioration of the situation" in Syria;

Whereas freelance journalist Ferzat Jarban was tortured and killed on November 19 or 20, 2011, after filming protests in Al-Qassir, Syria;

Whereas videographer Basil al-Sayed died on December 27, 2011, from a gunshot wound he suffered 5 days earlier at a checkpoint in the Baba Amr neighborhood in the city of Homs, Syria;

Whereas Shukri Abu al-Burghul of the state-owned daily Al Thawra and Radio Damascus died on January 3, 2012, in Damascus, Syria from a gunshot wound to the head he suffered four days earlier;

Whereas Gilles Jacquier, a correspondent with France 2 television, was killed in a grenade explosion on January 11, 2012, while covering demonstrations in the city of Homs;

Whereas freelance journalist Mazhar Tayyara, a videographer and photojournalist who contributed to Agence France-Presse and other international outlets, was killed by government forces' fire in the city of Homs on February 4, 2012;

Whereas New York Times correspondent Anthony Shadid died of an asthma attack on February 16, 2012, while attempting to leave Syria after reporting inside the country for a week, gathering information on the Free Syrian Army and other armed elements of the resistance to the government of President Bashar al-Assad;

Whereas freelance journalist Rami al-Sayed, who filmed videos of Syrian security forces' repressive acts, was killed on February 21, 2012, while covering the bombardment of the city of Homs by Government of Syria forces;

Whereas journalist Marie Colvin of the Sunday Times, a United States citizen, and freelance photojournalist Remi Ochlik were killed on February 22, 2012, after their makeshift press center in Homs was struck by rockets fired by Government of Syria forces;

Whereas, on February 22, 2012, Department of State Spokesman Mark Toner stated, "[T]oday, we're also clearly deeply troubled and saddened by reports that American journalist Marie Colvin and French journalist Remi Ochlik were killed today in Homs as a result of the intense shelling, the ongoing intense shelling by the Syrian regime. . . . We, of course, extend our deepest condolences to their families and loved ones and just note that their sacrifice in chronicling the daily suffering of the people of Homs stands as a testament to journalism's highest standards.";

Whereas 13 opposition activists in Syria were killed during a weeklong attempt to rescue 4 foreign journalists, 2 of whom were injured, who were trapped in Homs as a result of the bombardment by the Government of Syria that killed Marie Colvin and Remi Ochlik;

Whereas videographer Anas al-Tarsha, who documented unrest in the besieged city of Homs, was killed by a mortar round while filming the bombardment of the city's Qarabees district on February 24, 2012;

Whereas, from 1992 through 2010, zero journalists were killed in Syria according to the Committee to Protect Journalists; and

Whereas the Government of Syria has continued to arbitrarily arrest and detain prominent Syrian journalists and bloggers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) calls on the Government of Syria to immediately open the country up to independent and foreign journalists and immediately end its media blackout;

(2) condemns in the strongest possible terms the Government of Syria's abuse, intimidation, and violence towards journalists, videographers, and bloggers;

(3) calls on the Government of Syria to immediately release all journalists, videographers, and bloggers who have been detained, arrested, or imprisoned;

(4) pays tribute to the journalists who have lost their lives while reporting on the conflict in Syria;

(5) commends the bravery and courage of journalists who continue to operate in harm's way;

(6) supports the people of Syria seeking access to a free flow of accurate news and other forms of information;

(7) recognizes the critical role that technology plays in helping independent journalists report the facts on the ground;

(8) condemns all acts of censorship and other restrictions on freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom of expression in Syria;

(9) strongly condemns all nations that assist or enable the Government of Syria's ongoing repression of the media; and

(10) reaffirms the centrality of press freedom to efforts by the United States Government to support democracy and promote good governance around the world.

SENATE RESOLUTION 392—URGING THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY TO SAFEGUARD ITS CHRISTIAN HERITAGE AND TO RETURN CONFISCATED CHURCH PROPERTIES

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. KIRK) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 392

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the Secretary of State, in all official contacts with officials and representatives of the Government of Turkey, should emphasize that the Government of Turkey should—

(1) end all forms of religious discrimination;

(2) allow the rightful church and lay owners of Christian church properties, without hindrance or restriction, to organize and administer prayer services, religious education, clerical training, appointments, and succession, religious community gatherings, social services, including ministry to the needs of the poor and infirm, and other religious activities;

(3) return to their rightful owners all Christian churches and other places of worship, monasteries, schools, hospitals, monuments, relics, holy sites, and other religious properties, including movable properties, such as artwork, manuscripts, vestments, vessels, and other artifacts; and

(4) allow the rightful Christian church and lay owners of Christian church properties, without hindrance or restriction, to preserve, reconstruct, and repair, as they see fit, all Christian churches and other places of worship, monasteries, schools, hospitals, monuments, relics, holy sites, and other religious properties within Turkey.

SENATE RESOLUTION 393—DESIGNATING MARCH 11, 2012 AS “WORLD PLUMBING DAY”

Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 393

Whereas the industry of plumbing plays an important role in safeguarding the public health of the people of the United States and the world;

Whereas 884,000,000 people around the world do not have access to safe drinking water;

Whereas 2,600,000,000 people around the world live without adequate sanitation facilities;

Whereas the lack of sanitation is the largest cause of infection in the world;

Whereas in the developing world, 24,000 children under the age of 5 die every day from preventable causes, such as diarrhea contracted from unclean water;

Whereas safe and efficient plumbing helps save money and reduces future water supply costs and infrastructure costs;

Whereas the installation of modern plumbing systems must be accomplished in a specific, safe manner by trained professionals in order to prevent widespread disease, which can be crippling and deadly to the community;

Whereas the people of the United States rely on plumbing professionals to maintain, repair, and rebuild the aging water infrastructure of the United States;

Whereas Congress and plumbing professionals across the United States and the world are committed to safeguarding public health; and

Whereas the founding organization of World Plumbing Day, the World Plumbing Council, is currently being chaired by GP Russ Chaney, a United States citizen: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates March 11, 2012, as “World Plumbing Day”.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1824. Mr. GRAHAM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1813, to reauthorize Federal-aid highway and highway safety construction programs, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1825. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. TESTER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1813, supra.

SA 1826. Mr. ROBERTS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1813, supra.

SA 1827. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1813, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1828. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1813, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1829. Mr. JOHANNIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1813, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1824. Mr. GRAHAM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the bill S. 1813, to reauthorize Federal-aid highway and highway safety construction programs, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 792, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 793, line 2, and insert the following:

“(2) CLEAN FUEL VEHICLE.—The term ‘clean fuel vehicle’ means—

“(A) a passenger vehicle used to provide public transportation that the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency has certified sufficiently reduces energy consumption or reduces harmful emissions, including direct carbon emissions, when compared to a comparable standard vehicle; or

“(B) a zero emission bus used to provide public transportation.

On page 794, between lines 13 and 14, insert the following:

“(7) ZERO EMISSION BUS.—The term ‘zero emission bus’ means a clean fuel vehicle that produces no carbon or particulate matter.

On page 794, between lines 22 and 23, insert the following:

“(3) COMBINATION OF FUNDING SOURCES.—

“(A) COMBINATION PERMITTED.—A project carried out under this section may receive funding under section 5307, or any other provision of law.

“(B) GOVERNMENT SHARE.—Nothing in this paragraph may be construed to alter the Government share required under this section, section 5307, or any other provision of law.

On page 795, line 10, strike “(f)” and insert the following:

“(f) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION.—In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to projects relating to clean fuel buses that make greater reductions in energy consumption and harmful emissions, including direct carbon emissions, than comparable standard buses or other clean fuel buses.

“(g)

SA 1825. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. TESTER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1813, to reauthorize Federal-aid highway and highway safety construction programs, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of division D, insert the following:

TITLE IV—REAUTHORIZATION OF CERTAIN PROGRAMS

Subtitle A—Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-determination Program

SEC. 40401. SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SELF-DETERMINATION PROGRAM.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 3(11)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” after the semicolon at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by striking “fiscal year 2009 and each fiscal year thereafter” and inserting “each of fiscal years 2009 through 2011”; and

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) for fiscal year 2012 and each fiscal year thereafter, the amount that is equal to 95 percent of the full funding amount for the preceding fiscal year.”;

(2) in sections 101, 102, 203, 207, 208, 304, and 402, by striking “2011” each place it appears and inserting “2012”;

(3) in section 102—

(A) by striking “2008” each place it appears and inserting “2012”;

(B) in subsection (b)(2)(B), by inserting “in 2012” before “, the election”; and

(C) in subsection (d)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “paragraph (3)(B)” and inserting “subparagraph (D)”; and

(ii) in paragraph (3)—

(I) by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

“(A) NOTIFICATION.—The Governor of each eligible State shall notify the Secretary concerned of an election by an eligible county under this subsection not later than September 30, 2012, and each September 30 thereafter for each succeeding fiscal year.”;

(II) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (D) and moving the subparagraph so as to appear at the end of paragraph (1) of subsection (d); and

(III) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) FAILURE TO ELECT.—If the Governor of an eligible State fails to notify the Secretary concerned of the election for an eligible county by the date specified in subparagraph (A)—

“(i) the eligible county shall be considered to have elected to expend 80 percent of the funds in accordance with paragraph (1)(A); and

“(ii) the remainder shall be available to the Secretary concerned to carry out projects in the eligible county to further the purpose described in section 202(b).”;

(4) in section 103(d)(2), by striking “fiscal year 2011” and inserting “each of fiscal years 2011 and 2012”;

(5) in section 202, by adding at the end the following:

“(c) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—A resource advisory committee may, in accordance with section 203, propose to use not more than 10 percent of the project funds of an eligible county for any fiscal year for administrative expenses associated with operating the resource advisory committee under this title.”;

(6) in section 204(e)(3)(B)(iii), by striking “and 2011” and inserting “through 2012”;

(7) in section 205(a)(4), by striking “2006” each place it appears and inserting “2011”;

(8) in section 208(b), by striking “2012” and inserting “2013”;

(9) in section 302(a)(2)(A), by inserting “and” after the semicolon; and

(10) in section 304(b), by striking “2012” and inserting “2013”.

(b) FAILURE TO MAKE ELECTION.—For each county that failed to make an election for fiscal year 2011 in accordance with section 102(d)(3)(A) of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7112(d)(3)(A)), there shall be available to the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out projects to further the purpose described in section 202(b) of that Act (16 U.S.C. 7122(b)), from amounts in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the amount that is equal to 15 percent of the total share of the State payment that otherwise would have been made to the county under that Act for fiscal year 2011.

Subtitle B—Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program

SEC. 40411. PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES.

Section 6906 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2013”.