

AIDS, which have a disparate impact on racial and ethnic minorities. This legislation also helps to provide affordable and culturally appropriate access to care in several ways.

My bill, the Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2012, includes proposals to remove significant barriers to health care coverage and access and maximize the positive impact of federal investments in health care in minority communities. For example, it would re-establish Medicaid eligibility for citizens of the Compact of Free Association nations living in the United States. This would greatly ease the financial burden on States like Hawaii and Arkansas, which have been forced to absorb the costs of providing health and social services, education, and public safety for Compact migrants in accordance with unfunded Federal mandates since 1996.

My bill would also make health care more affordable and improve access by providing a 100 percent Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage, FMAP, for Native Hawaiians who receive health care from Federally Qualified Health Centers or the Native Hawaiian Health Care System. The increased FMAP will ensure that Native Hawaiians have access to the essential health services provided by community health centers and the Native Hawaiian Health Care System. These provisions would provide treatment for Native Hawaiians that is similar to that already provided to Native Alaskans through the Indian Health Service or tribal organizations.

This legislation will make it easier for minorities with cultural and language barriers to improve their health outcomes by enhancing language access services, making health literacy a priority in patient care, and making sure there is culturally competent care in the health care delivery system. My bill will support professionals who are well-equipped to provide quality health care that is culturally and linguistically appropriate. As a part of this effort, this legislation creates training opportunities for willing and competent minority candidates to enter the health care workforce.

The Health Equity and Accountability Act also seeks to ensure that communities of color benefit from the rapid advances in health information technology, or health IT. It also encourages new investments in health IT infrastructure, which will serve as the foundation for improving the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency for all Americans in our future health care system. Improvements in health IT and health IT infrastructure will also make it possible for rural communities to access mobile health services and other treatment and diagnostics that were previously unavailable.

Another vital service that my bill seeks to make more accessible is mental health care. The Affordable Care Act fundamentally improved services for individuals with mental health and

addiction disorders. Despite the improvements, mental health treatment remains underutilized, especially by minorities, due to social stigma and cultural resistance. To develop access and encourage treatment, my bill incorporates culturally competent strategies to address mental and behavioral health problems affecting minority communities and authorizes investment in researching and treating these serious conditions.

However, we cannot simply put these provisions in place and believe that they will eliminate all health disparities. We must have accountability and regular evaluation of these programs to ensure they are being carried out as they were intended, and that they are meeting their goals. To that end, my bill strengthens oversight by the Department of Health and Human Services, requiring the Department to make regular scheduled reports to Congress on the impact of these initiatives to ensure that they are continuing to reduce health disparities.

April is National Minority Health Month, and as we work diligently to transform health care in America, it is essential that we strive to eliminate the health disparities that affect our minority groups. This bill would significantly improve the quality of life for indigenous people, ethnic and racial minorities, as well as other marginalized groups. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation, and begin an open dialogue on how we can close the gap in health care across the country.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 440—RECOGNIZING THE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MEXICAN HOLIDAY OF CINCO DE MAYO

Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. REID, Mr. BENNET, Mr. AKAKA, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mrs. HUTCHISON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 440

Whereas May 5, or "Cinco de Mayo" in Spanish, is celebrated each year as a date of great importance by the Mexican and Mexican-American communities;

Whereas the Cinco de Mayo holiday commemorates May 5, 1862, the date on which Mexicans who were struggling for independence and freedom fought the Battle of Puebla;

Whereas Cinco de Mayo has become widely celebrated annually by nearly all Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, north and south of the United States-Mexico border;

Whereas the Battle of Puebla was but one of the many battles that the courageous Mexican people won in their long and brave struggle for independence and freedom;

Whereas the French army, confident that its battle-seasoned troops were far superior to the less-seasoned Mexican troops, expected little or no opposition from the Mexican army;

Whereas the French army, which had not experienced defeat against any of the finest troops of Europe in more than half a century, sustained a disastrous loss at the hands of an outnumbered and ill-equipped, but highly spirited and courageous, Mexican army;

Whereas, after 3 bloody assaults on Puebla in which more than 1,000 French soldiers lost their lives, the French troops were finally defeated and driven back by the outnumbered Mexican troops;

Whereas the courageous spirit that Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza and his men displayed during that historic battle can never be forgotten;

Whereas many brave Mexicans willingly gave their lives for the causes of justice and freedom in the Battle of Puebla on Cinco de Mayo;

Whereas the sacrifice of the Mexican fighters was instrumental in keeping Mexico from falling under European domination while, in the United States, the Union Army battled Confederate forces in the Civil War;

Whereas Cinco de Mayo serves as a reminder that the foundation of the United States was built by people from many countries and diverse cultures who were willing to fight and die for freedom;

Whereas Cinco de Mayo also serves as a reminder of the close ties between the people of Mexico and the people of the United States;

Whereas, in a larger sense, Cinco de Mayo symbolizes the right of a free people to self-determination, just as Benito Juarez, the president of Mexico during the Battle of Puebla, once said, "El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz" ("Respect for the rights of others is peace"); and

Whereas many people celebrate Cinco de Mayo during the entire week in which the date falls: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the historic struggle of the people of Mexico for independence and freedom, which Cinco de Mayo commemorates; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe Cinco de Mayo with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I rise with Senators CORNYN, MENENDEZ, BINGAMAN, REID, BENNET, STABENOW, AKAKA, FEINSTEIN, and HUTCHISON to submit a resolution commemorating Cinco de Mayo.

We all love Cinco de Mayo for the food and festivities that we have grown so accustomed to across the country. However, the day is also of great historical relevance, commemorating the Battle of Puebla, an unlikely Mexican military victory over the French in 1862. Since then, Cinco de Mayo has come to represent Mexican-Americans' many contributions to the United States. For many decades Coloradans and communities across the country have celebrated this day in a way that brings pride to the contributions of the Mexican-American community of our state.

The commemoration of Cinco de Mayo also highlights the courage that Mexican forces displayed on May 5, 1862, a courage that was welcomed by the Union Army as it battled Confederate forces in the American Civil War. The victory of the beleaguered force of Mexican troops at the Battle of Puebla was a setback for Napoleon's France

that weakened France's immense resources and limited its ability to meddle in America's Civil War. As Mexico sought to defend itself from European aggression, the Battle of Puebla is a reminder for us that the foundation of the United States was also built through fights in which the United States often found itself as the underdog. But through perseverance, the willingness to fight and die for freedom, and the contributions of a diverse cultural mix of Americans from across the globe, we have been made stronger. This is something we should celebrate about our country's history.

This day in history has become especially important in Colorado, where the contributions of many Mexican-American families can be seen throughout our communities. As in years past, towns throughout Colorado and our nation will celebrate with food, educational activities, music and dancing, and I encourage my fellow Coloradans to join in their communities' celebrations.

SENATE RESOLUTION 441—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF MAY 2012 AS NATIONAL YOUTH TRAFFIC SAFETY MONTH

Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. THUNE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 441

Whereas motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for youth in the United States;

Whereas thousands of youth are injured or die each year in motor vehicle crashes;

Whereas on average, 11 youths die each day in motor vehicle crashes;

Whereas on average, May through August is the deadliest period for youths on our nation's highways;

Whereas on average, 8 of the top 10 deadliest days for youths on our nation's highways were between May and August;

Whereas events such as prom and graduation, and the summer driving season, contribute to the risk of a motor vehicle crash due to an increase in the amount of time youth spend on the road and in celebratory activities;

Whereas it is essential to teach our youths that driving is a privilege and with that privilege comes risks and responsibilities;

Whereas this education is essential to preventing risky behaviors that can result in tragic crashes;

Whereas the National Organizations For Youth Safety (NOYS) established a national youth campaign and National Youth Traffic Safety Month to draw attention to the increased rate of motor vehicle crashes involving youth between May and August, to help enforce youth safe driving laws, and to support youth and community education on youth traffic safety; and

Whereas NOYS invites all youths, families, and communities to participate in National Youth Traffic Safety Month:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the designation of May 2012 as "National Youth Traffic Safety Month";

(2) supports youth traffic safety awareness; and

(3) encourages people across the United States to observe National Youth Traffic Safety Month with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies.

SENATE RESOLUTION 442—CELEBRATING THE 140TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARBOR DAY

Mr. JOHANNIS (for himself and Mr. NELSON of Nebraska) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 442

Whereas Arbor Day was founded in Nebraska City, Nebraska on April 10, 1872, to recognize the importance of planting trees;

Whereas it is estimated that on the first Arbor Day, more than 1,000,000 trees were planted in the State of Nebraska alone;

Whereas Arbor Day is observed in all 50 States and across the world;

Whereas participating in Arbor Day activities promotes civic participation and highlights the importance of planting and caring for trees and vegetation;

Whereas those activities provide an opportunity to convey to future generations the value of land and stewardship;

Whereas National Arbor Day is observed on the last Friday of April each year; and

Whereas April 27, 2012, marks the 140th anniversary of Arbor Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes April 27, 2012, as National Arbor Day;

(2) celebrates the 140th anniversary of Arbor Day;

(3) supports the goals and ideals of Arbor Day; and

(4) encourages the people of United States to participate in Arbor Day activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 443—HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF AUXILIARY BISHOP AGUSTIN ROMAN

Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 443

Whereas Agustín Román was appointed auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Miami, Florida in 1979, becoming the first Cuban to be appointed bishop in the United States;

Whereas Agustín Román was expelled from Cuba in 1961 by the regime of Fidel Castro, along with many other Roman Catholic priests;

Whereas Agustín Román ministered in Chile for 4 years before coming to Miami, Florida in 1966, where he quickly became a spiritual leader and advocate for the Cuban community in Miami, as well as for many other immigrant communities, including Haitian refugees;

Whereas Agustín Román was fluent in Latin, English, French, and Spanish, and served on the Bishops' Committee for Hispanic Affairs, worked as a hospital chaplain, and became episcopal vicar for the Spanish-speaking people of the Archdiocese of Miami;

Whereas Agustín Román was the son of humble Cuban peasants, which influenced his commitment to humility, tenacity, and unceasing devotion to his ministry in southern Florida;

Whereas Agustín Román was instrumental in the construction of the Shrine of Our

Lady of Charity on Biscayne Bay, which serves as a monument to the patron saint of Cuba, the Virgin of Charity of Cobre, and attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year;

Whereas in 1980 Agustín Román served as a mediator during the Mariel boatlift incident, helping more than 100,000 Cubans flee the island and safely resettle in the United States;

Whereas Agustín Román helped negotiate a peaceful resolution to the 1987 riots of Mariel prisoner uprisings in Federal prisons, earning him national recognition for his compassion, gentility, and humble spirit;

Whereas after his retirement at the age of 75, Agustín Román remained active at the Shrine of Our Lady Charity, greeting visitors and responding to letters from fellow Cuban exiles; and

Whereas Agustín Román passed away on Wednesday, April 11, 2012: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and honors the life of Agustín Román;

(2) recognizes and honors the spiritual leadership of Agustín Román and his dedication to freedom and faith;

(3) offers heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and loved ones of Agustín Román; and

(4) in memory of Agustín Román, calls on the United States to continue policies that promote respect for the fundamental principles of religious freedom, democracy, and human rights in Cuba, in a manner consistent with the aspirations of the people of Cuba.

SENATE RESOLUTION 444—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF MAY 1 THROUGH MAY 7, 2012, AS "NATIONAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT WEEK"

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. THUNE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 444

Whereas a decline in physical activity has contributed to the unprecedented epidemic of childhood obesity, which has more than tripled in the United States since 1980;

Whereas regular physical activity is necessary to support normal and healthy growth in children and is essential to the continued health and well-being of children;

Whereas according to the Centers for Disease Control, overweight adolescents have a 70- to 80-percent chance of becoming overweight adults, increasing their risk for chronic disease, disability, and death;

Whereas physical activity reduces the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and certain types of cancers;

Whereas type 2 diabetes can no longer be referred to as "late in life" or "adult onset" diabetes because type 2 diabetes presently occurs in children as young as 10 years old;

Whereas the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans issued by the Department of Health and Human Services recommend that children engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, and preferably all, days of the week;

Whereas according to the Centers for Disease Control, only 19 percent of high school students are meeting the goal of 60 minutes of physical activity each day;

Whereas children spend many of their waking hours at school and, as a result, need to be active during the school day to meet the recommendations of the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans;