

has just been a real strategic focus which I would like to believe our caucus and the adoption caucus as well, the foster care caucus, has helped to produce.

We have had more adoptions out of foster care. We have had more reunifications out of foster care. We have shortened the time that children are in foster care. But we have, and in this month of May still have, many challenges. That is why Senator GRASSLEY and I urge our colleagues to join us in this resolution, S. Res. 462. Be a co-sponsor. Step up and say by your co-sponsorship that you care about this issue, that you want to help us continue to make progress.

I want to remember our former colleague, John Chafee, who, when he was in the Senate, was an extraordinary advocate for foster care children. We named the John Chafee Foster Care Independence Program in his honor. As Senator GRASSLEY said, we are making progress with helping our children who age out when we failed to reunite them with their birth family, we failed to find them an adoptive home. They are aging out, but we are trying to give them more help and support. That is still a challenge.

Some of our Members are working on foster children and school choice. If children are brought into the foster care system and they are separated from their families, it is quite traumatic. Of course it is for their own good. Sometimes their families are being abusive. Sometimes their families are being grossly negligent. Unfortunately, in this day and age sometimes their families are deported and they are in the home alone. We want to make sure the children get to stay at least in the school of their choice. It is one thing to be pulled from your family; it is another thing to have to lose your family 1 day and your school the next day and all of your teachers, all of your friends.

There is legislation pending that would give foster children the opportunity to stay in the school they are in when they enter care, if that is their choice. That would be a great reform.

We also want to continue to promote kinship adoption, reaching out to the extended family, trying to keep children placed in their extended families who are willing and responsible to raise them—but not placing children with kin if the kin or the relatives are not responsible and not willing; that is not a solution.

Finally, we want to promote quality foster families. This is a problem that is easily solvable. It seems like it is a lot, this number, 450-some-odd thousand children. But it represents only one-half of 1 percent of all children in America. This is not a big number. It sounds like it when we say 450,000, but the percentage, one-half of 1 percent—we calculated it 1 day on just the back of a napkin. If one family for every four churches in America would say yes to taking in a foster child or to

adopt a child out of foster care, there would be no more orphans in our country.

Again, if one family out of every four churches stepped up for the children available for adoption, we would have no more orphans in America. Then we could focus on recruiting quality foster families who can help these children to find their way—to find their way back to their biological families with their sibling groups intact or find their way to a new family who will love them and nurture them and protect them and support them forever.

That is what families do. We do not support our children until they are 18 and let them go on their merry way. We are with them until the last breath. That is what parents do. We are with our children forever. Every child in this world deserves a forever family.

Senator GRASSLEY and I have come together. We work to strengthen our foster care system. We know it is broken in places. We know it can be fixed. We work on fixing it every day.

I thank our colleagues who have joined us in just recognizing Foster Care Month. As Senator GRASSLEY said in his conclusion, and I will say in mine, we want to thank everyone who helps on this every month of the year, not just May. We want to thank the teachers who reach out especially to the foster children they know are in their classrooms. We want to thank the judges who process their cases quickly.

I particularly want to thank the CASA workers. I am a big believer in CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocates. I think it is a great organization for all the volunteers who worked to help make our foster care system in America better.

Again, this is S. Res. 462.

I would like to thank our counterparts in the House.

It has been a real joy and pleasure to work with Senator GRASSLEY these many years on helping to promote the very best practices in the country on reforming our foster care system in America and trying to help who we can around the world.

SENATE RESOLUTION 463—DESIGNATING MAY 19, 2012, AS “NATIONAL KIDS TO PARKS DAY”

Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 463

Whereas the second annual National Kids to Parks Day will be celebrated on May 19, 2012;

Whereas the goal of National Kids to Parks Day is to empower young people and encourage families to get outdoors and visit the parks of the United States;

Whereas, on National Kids to Parks Day, individuals from rural and urban areas of the United States can be reintroduced to the splendid National Parks and State and neighborhood parks that are located in their communities;

Whereas communities across the United States offer a variety of natural resources and public land, often with free access, to individuals seeking outdoor recreation;

Whereas the people of the United States should encourage young people to lead a more active lifestyle, as too many young people in the United States are overweight or obese;

Whereas National Kids to Parks Day is an opportunity for families to take a break from their busy lives and come together for a day of wholesome fun; and

Whereas National Kids to Parks Day aims to broaden the appreciation of young people for nature and the outdoors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 19, 2012, as “National Kids to Parks Day”;

(2) recognizes the importance of outdoor recreation and the preservation of open spaces to the health of the young people of the United States; and

(3) calls on the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 464—COMMEMORATING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota (for himself and Mr. THUNE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 464

Whereas on January 2, 1942, the War Department established Rapid City Army Air Base in South Dakota as a training location for B-17 Flying Fortress crews;

Whereas thousands of pilots, navigators, radio operators, and gunners were trained at Rapid City Army Air Base and went on to support the allied efforts in World War II;

Whereas on June 13, 1953, President Dwight D. Eisenhower visited the base and dedicated it in memory of Brigadier General Richard E. Ellsworth;

Whereas during the Cold War, Ellsworth Air Force Base maintained 2 legs of the strategic triad, strategic bombardment, and intercontinental ballistic missiles, earning the title “The Showplace of Strategic Air Command”;

Whereas 2012 marks the 25th year of the B-1B Lancer mission at Ellsworth Air Force Base;

Whereas in 1999, B-1Bs from Ellsworth Air Force Base flew over 100 combat missions in support of NATO forces in Operation Allied Force in Kosovo;

Whereas Ellsworth Air Force Base has played a crucial role in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, and Operation Enduring Freedom, deploying over 10,000 personnel and flying over 6,000 combat sorties in those operations;

Whereas the first ever B-1B global strike mission launched from the United States came from Ellsworth Air Force Base on March 30, 2011, striking targets in Libya before refueling, rearming, and hitting additional targets in Libya on the return;

Whereas, for 70 years, Ellsworth Air Force Base has served as an integral part of the defense strategy of the United States and served as the proud home to thousands of bomber pilots, navigators, radio operators, gunners, missile launch control facility personnel, and aircraft and missile maintenance personnel;

Whereas, the personnel from Ellsworth Air Force Base have a history of compiling some

of the highest marks in competitive readiness and maintenance exercises and competitions;

Whereas, for the past 65 years, Ellsworth Air Force Base has—

(1) been home to the 28th Bomb Wing and some of the most impressive aircraft in the United States, including the B-17 Flying Fortress, the B-29 Superfortress, the RB-36 Peacemaker, the B-52 Stratofortress, the KC-135 Stratotanker, KC-97 Stratofreighter and the B-1B Lancer; and

(2) for parts of 4 decades, served as an important cog in the missile defense system of the United States, featuring the Titan and Minuteman missile systems;

Whereas Ellsworth Air Force Base continues to evolve and is preparing to welcome the MQ-9 Reaper mission later in 2012; and

Whereas, Ellsworth Air Force Base and the communities of Rapid City and Box Elder, South Dakota have and will continue to enjoy a long standing, mutually beneficial relationship; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the contributions of Ellsworth Air Force Base to the security of the United States;

(2) commemorates 70 years of excellence and service by Ellsworth Air Force Base to the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to recognize and honor the dedicated and exemplary service of the airmen and their families, past and present, stationed at Ellsworth Air Force Base.

SENATE RESOLUTION 465—RECOGNIZING THAT THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF COLORADO HAS PROCLAIMED 2012 AS THE “YEAR OF WATER”

Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 465

Whereas water is a precious and limited natural resource;

Whereas a clean and sustainable water supply is essential to the high quality of life enjoyed by Coloradans;

Whereas a clean and sustainable water supply is essential to the success of all aspects of the economy of the State of Colorado, including the agricultural, municipal, industrial, and recreational economies;

Whereas as a headwaters State, the health of the water in the State of Colorado has a direct impact on neighboring States;

Whereas the population of the State of Colorado is predicted to double by 2050;

Whereas educating the public about limited water resources will be critical in meeting the increasing demands placed on water in the future;

Whereas 2012 marks the—

(1) 100th anniversary of the construction of the Rio Grande Reservoir;

(2) 90th anniversary of the Colorado River Compact of 1922;

(3) 75th anniversary of the creation of the Colorado Water Conservation Board;

(4) 75th anniversary of the creation of the Colorado River Water Conservation District;

(5) 75th anniversary of the creation of the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District and the Colorado-Big Thompson Project;

(6) 50th anniversary of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project, administered by the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District;

(7) 10th anniversary of the Colorado Foundation for Water Education; and

(8) 10th anniversary of the Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District; and

Whereas the Governor of the State of Colorado has proclaimed 2012 as the “Year of

Water” in the State of Colorado: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes that the Governor of the State of Colorado has proclaimed 2012 as the “Year of Water” in the State of Colorado.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 16, 2012, at 2:30 p.m. in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The Committee will hold a hearing entitled, “Oversight of the Federal Communications Commission.”

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 16, 2012, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, to conduct a hearing entitled “Identifying Opportunities for Health Care Delivery System Reform: Lessons from the Front Line” on May 16, 2012, at 10 a.m. in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 16, 2012, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on May 16, 2012, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Oversight of the Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.”

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Children’s Health and Environmental Responsibility of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 16, 2012, at 10 a.m. in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to con-

duct a hearing entitled, “Growing Long-Term Value: Corporate Environmental Responsibility and Innovation.”

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Chantel Boyens, a detailee to the Budget Committee, be given floor privileges for the pendency of the debate on the budget resolutions and S. 2516, the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Laura Sands and Katrine Lazar of my staff be granted floor privileges for the duration of today’s proceedings.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 17, 2012, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar Nos. 646 and 647; that there be 90 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form to run concurrently on both nominations en bloc; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the nominations be subject to a 60-vote threshold; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action and the Senate then resume legislative session; further, that the cloture votes with respect to these nominations be vitiated.

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

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. CASEY. 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. 463, S. Res. 464, and S. Res. 465.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senate will proceed to consider the resolutions en bloc.

S. RES. 463

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I rise today in support of a pretty common sense goal—getting more kids outside and engaged in the great outdoors.