

of amendment No. 2229 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2232

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2232 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2295

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2295 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2306

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2306 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2308

At the request of Mrs. McCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2308 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2311

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2311 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2316

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2316 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2318

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2318 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2319

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2319 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2323

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2323 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2325

At the request of Mr. CHAMBLISS, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2325 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. COLLINS):

S.J. Res. 43. A joint resolution approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I rise to discuss events in the country of Burma. Every year since 2003, I have come to the floor of the U.S. Senate to introduce the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, and every year introduction of this bill has been accompanied by a somber message to the Senate: that reform in Burma is nowhere in sight. That is what I have said every year going back to 2003.

This year, I am pleased to say that though the bill's language is the same, the message is far different, as is the legal effect of the legislation. In a remarkable turnabout of events over the past 18 months, Burma has made dramatic changes for the better. In response to these developments, the administration recently decided it will ease many of the economic sanctions against Burma through exercise of its waiver authority. As a result, this year's Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act would effectively renew only a handful of the sanctions against the regime and would preserve the administration's flexibility to use its waiver authority.

In 2008, the Burmese junta put in place a new Constitution—a very flawed document. It does not ensure civilian control of the military. In fact, the charter may only be amended if over 75 percent of the Parliament vote in favor of such changes and one-fourth of the seats in Parliament are reserved for the military.

In November 2010, Burma held an election under this new charter, which was universally derided as being neither free nor fair. The party of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi—the National League for Democracy—refused to participate due to the unfairness of the electoral process.

Restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly were manifest, and there

was a prohibition against political prisoners, such as Suu Kyi, running for office. Not surprisingly, the junta-supported party won over three-quarters of the nonappointed parliamentary seats. The new government took office on April 1, 2011.

Shortly after this seemingly unpromising election, some signs of change began to appear. Suu Kyi was freed after years under house arrest. By July 2011 she was permitted to leave Rangoon for the first time since her release. In August she visited the new capital, Naypyitaw, and met with the new President, Thein Sein.

In September 2011 the government lifted its prohibition against major news Web sites and dropped anti-Western slogans from state publications. That same month the regime announced it would suspend action on a controversial dam to be constructed by China in Kachin State. The project was strongly opposed by democracy advocates and ethnic leaders.

As part of its reforms, the legislature enacted a bill that permitted Suu Kyi to participate in the April 1, 2012, by-election and made it possible for her party to reregister, after having technically lost its party status for boycotting the November 2010 balloting.

In January of 2012 a score of political prisoners were released and a preliminary cease-fire agreement was reached with the Karen, appearing to end one of the longest running ethnic disputes in the world.

In April 2012 Burma held a by-election to replace lawmakers who had assumed Cabinet roles. For the first time since 1990, the NLD participated in the election. Of the 45 seats that were open, the NLD contested 44 and won 43.

Suu Kyi herself won a seat in what was clearly a dramatic victory for the opposition. This spring, for the first time in a quarter of a century, Suu Kyi was granted a passport and traveled outside Burma. Thus, in a mere 18 months, Suu Kyi has gone from political prisoner to Member of Parliament. That in and of itself is a remarkable change, and it reflects more broadly the wide-ranging reforms that have occurred in the country.

In response to the Burmese Government's efforts, on May 17 the State Department announced that it would undertake a number of administrative steps to ease sanctions against Burma. These include removing both the investment ban and the financial services ban against Burma, except in transactions involving bad actors. In addition to suspending certain economic sanctions, the administration announced that it would exchange full Ambassadors with Naypyitaw.

Mr. President, I support each of these steps taken by the State Department.

What caused the Burmese Government to initiate these democratic reforms? It is hard to know for certain, but sanctions seem to have played an important part in bringing the government around. No country likes being

viewed as a pariah, and the Burmese regime seems no different.

When I visited Burma back in January, the one thing I heard from all the government officials with whom I met—the President, the Foreign Minister, the Speaker of the Lower House—they all said: We want the sanctions removed.

Suu Kyi herself publicly stated a few months ago that “to those who ask whether or not sanctions have been effective, I would say yes, very, very confidently, because this government is always asking for sanctions to be removed. . . . So, sanctions have been effective. If sanctions had not been effective this would not be such an important issue for them.” All of that is from Suu Kyi herself.

So some Senators may reasonably ask why are we moving this sanctions bill again if Burma has made such dramatically positive steps. Well, there are several reasons. Let me lay them out.

First, the Burmese Government still has not met all the necessary conditions to justify a complete—a complete—repeal of all existing sanctions. Despite the unmistakable progress made by the Burmese Government, now is not the time to end our ability either to encourage further government reform or to revisit sanctions if that became necessary. As Suu Kyi herself has cautioned, the situation in Burma is “not irreversible.” Serious challenges need to be addressed.

Violence in Kachin State remains a serious problem. Numerous political prisoners remain behind bars. The constitution is still completely undemocratic. And the regime's relationship with North Korea, especially when it comes to arms sales with Pyongyang, remains an issue of grave concern.

As I noted, renewing the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act would leave intact the import ban against Burmese goods, thus maintaining leverage the executive branch can utilize to help prompt further reform. Reauthorizing this measure would permit the executive branch, in consultation with Congress, to calibrate sanctions as necessary, thus preserving its flexibility.

Second, the renewal of this sanctions bill will not affect—will not affect—the administration's current efforts to ease sanctions as announced on May 17. Let me repeat that renewing the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act will leave undisturbed the process for suspending sanctions announced 3 weeks ago. In part for this reason, the State Department supports renewal of this measure. In fact, a vote for reauthorization of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act should be seen as a vote in support of the administration's easing of sanctions and a vote to support reform efforts in Burma.

As a practical matter, renewal of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act would entail, No. 1, extending for another year the ban against Burmese

imports; No. 2, continuing authority for financial services sanctions but leaving in place the authority the administration needs to proceed with the easing—the easing—of such restrictions; and No. 3, leaving untouched the administration's ability to ease the investment ban, which is part of a separate bill.

Finally, renewal of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act has continued bipartisan support in Congress and the support of Suu Kyi and the democratic opposition in Burma.

There are, unfortunately, too few issues where the administration has sought to work with Congress in a bipartisan manner—mighty few, in fact—but on the issue of sanctions reauthorization, the State Department and I are in full agreement. I also know that my longstanding partner on Burma on the other side of the aisle, Senator FEINSTEIN, shares my sentiments about reauthorizing this measure. As for Burma's democratic opposition, I spoke with Suu Kyi just a few days ago. She told me she believes the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act should be renewed.

If Burma stays on the path it seems to be on to reform, it will require significant help in reforming its economy and in developing business practices that encourage enduring foreign direct investment and corporate responsibility. A great deal of work must be done as Burma looks ahead to hosting the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in 2014. For the first time in a half a century, Burma seems—seems—to be on the right path to reform, and reauthorization of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act places the United States squarely on the side of reform and of reformers.

For the reasons I have laid out, I believe a renewal of this measure is the right step to take. Burma has made great strides over the past 18 months, and Congress should recognize those strides. At the same time, Congress should not be fully satisfied with recent reforms, as much more work remains to be done.

In closing, I am introducing the renewal of the Freedom and Democracy Act, originally passed in 2003, for myself; Senator FEINSTEIN, with whom I have worked on this over the years and referred to in my remarks; Senator JOHN MCCAIN, who has been very active in this area and met with Suu Kyi this past year; Senator DURBIN; and Senator COLLINS, who had the opportunity to meet with Suu Kyi just the week before last—all of whom are active and interested in this issue.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, before my friend leaves the floor, I express my appreciation—really from our country—for his tireless efforts in focusing attention on what has been going on in Burma. He has come to the floor and given numerous statements to focus at-

tention on this issue. It took a while to get some traction, but finally he got some traction, and that is why progress was made in Burma.

I appreciate his mentioning Senator FEINSTEIN. She has also been very focused on this. But no one has been to the floor more than Senator MCCONNELL talking about this issue. As a result of that, we have made progress. It has been slow, but it has been deliberate, and I think we can see a new day for that country.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I thank my good friend from Nevada.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the joint resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

S.J. RES. 43

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT TO BURMESE FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY ACT OF 2003.

Section 9(b)(3) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-61; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended by striking “nine years” and inserting “twelve years”.

SEC. 2. RENEWAL OF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS UNDER BURMESE FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY ACT OF 2003.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Congress approves the renewal of the import restrictions contained in section 3(a)(1) and section 3A (b)(1) and (c)(1) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—This joint resolution shall be deemed to be a “renewal resolution” for purposes of section 9 of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This joint resolution and the amendment made by this joint resolution shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this joint resolution or July 26, 2012, whichever occurs first.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today once again with my friend and colleague from Kentucky, Senator MCCONNELL, to introduce a joint resolution to renew the import ban on Burma for another year. We are proud to be joined by Senators MCCAIN and DURBIN in this important effort.

Congressman JOE CROWLEY and Congressman PETER KING have introduced this resolution in the House and I thank them for their leadership and support.

Over the past year, we have seen some remarkable changes in Burma after years of violence and repression.

But the government of Burma still has a lot of work to do to demonstrate to us, the international community, and, above all, the people of Burma that it is truly committed to reform, democratization, and national reconciliation.

We should renew this ban for another year as an incentive to the government of Burma to continue on the path it has undertaken and take additional actions.

I have been involved in the struggle for freedom and democracy in Burma for 15 years.

In 1997, former Senator William Cohen and I authored legislation requiring the President to ban new U.S. investment in Burma if he determined that the government of Burma had physically harmed, re-arrested or exiled Aung San Suu Kyi or committed large-scale repression or violence against the democratic opposition.

President Clinton issued the ban in a 1997 Executive Order.

In 2003, after the regime attempted to assassinate Aung San Suu Kyi, Senator MCCONNELL and I introduced the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003, which placed a complete ban on imports from Burma. It allowed that ban to be renewed one year at a time.

It was signed into law and has been renewed annually since then. It is set to expire on July 26, which is why a renewal of that ban is now before us today.

But unlike past years, we have some good news to report.

Burma has begun to take some significant steps towards embracing democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

This is welcome news after so many years of inaction coupled with despotic military rule.

How did we get to this point?

Recall that in 1990 Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy overwhelmingly won the last free parliamentary elections in Burma, but those results were annulled by the military junta, then named the State Law and Order Restoration Council or SLORC.

These events marked the beginning of more than two decades of violence, oppression, and human rights abuses.

In 2008, the ruling military junta, renamed the State Peace and Development Council, pushed through the ratification of a new constitution, which was drafted without the input of the democratic opposition, led by Aung San Suu Kyi.

Elections for the new parliament were held in November 2010, but Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy were prohibited from participating.

The Union Solidarity and Development Party, comprised of ex-military officials, won approximately 80 percent of the seats. The new parliament elected former General and Prime Minister, Thein Sein, as President.

Following the elections, Suu Kyi was finally released from house arrest, after being in prison or house arrest for the better part of 20 years.

While I was pleased that Suu Kyi was free, I was deeply concerned that nothing had really changed for the people of Burma.

Suu Kyi and her party were blocked from participating in the political process. The military maintained its grip on the government and the economy. Democracy advocates and human rights activists remained in prison. Violence against ethnic minority groups continued unabated.

Yet, in the past year we have seen more positive change than we had in the past 20 years.

Indeed, Burma's new government has taken a number of significant actions in an effort to rejoin the international community.

Hundreds of political prisoners were released.

New legislation broadening the rights of political and civic associations has been enacted; and negotiations with ethnic minority groups have begun and some cease-fires have taken effect.

In addition, Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy, NLD, were allowed to compete in by-elections for 45 open seats in parliament in April 2012.

Suu Kyi and the NLD won 43 of the 44 seats they contested.

For those of us who have been inspired by her courage, her dedication to peace and her tireless efforts for freedom and democracy, it was a thrilling and deeply moving event. Years of sacrifice and hard work had shown results the people of Burma had spoken with a clear voice in support of freedom and democracy.

The U.S. has responded to this reform process in a number of ways.

Secretary Clinton traveled to Burma last December and announced the two countries would resume full diplomatic relations.

Following the April parliamentary elections, the administration announced that it would nominate Derek Mitchell to be the first U.S. ambassador to Burma in 22 years and suspend sanctions on investment and financial services.

I supported these actions. It is entirely appropriate to acknowledge the steps Burma has already taken and encourage additional reforms.

Some may ask then: why stop there? Given the reforms, why not let the ban on imports simply expire?

The fact of the matter is, the reforms are not irreversible and the government of Burma still needs to do more to respond to the legitimate concerns of the people of Burma and the international community.

First, it must address the dominant role of the military in Burma under the new constitution.

The military is guaranteed 25 percent of the seats without elections and remains independent of any civilian oversight.

In addition, the Commander-in-Chief of the military has the authority to dismiss the government and rule the country under Martial Law.

It goes without saying that such powers are incompatible with a truly democratic government.

Second, Burma must stop all violence against ethnic minorities. I am particularly concerned about reports that the Burmese military is continuing attacks in Kachin State, displacing thousands of civilians and killing others.

Third, the government must release all political prisoners.

I applaud the decision of the Government of Burma to release hundreds of political prisoners, including a number of high-profile democracy and human rights activists.

Yet, according to the State Department, hundreds more remain in detention.

Unfortunately, the government of Burma maintains there are no more political prisoners. We must keep the pressure on Burma until all democracy and human rights activists are free and able to resume their lives and careers.

As we debate renewing the import ban, it is important to consider the advice and counsel of Aung San Suu Kyi and the democratic opposition.

For her part, Suu Kyi has said that while she does not oppose suspending sanctions, the international community must be cautious. Speaking via Skype to an event in Washington D.C. last month she said:

I sometimes feel that people are too optimistic about the scene in Burma. You have to remember that the democratization process in Burma is not irreversible. I have said openly that we can never look upon it as irreversible until such time that the military commits itself to democratization solidly and efficiently.

I understand that Suu Kyi has spoken to Senator MCCONNELL directly about this matter and she supports renewing the import ban for another year.

I believe that renewing this ban will help keep Burma on the path to full democratization and national reconciliation and support the work of Suu Kyi, the democratic opposition, and the reformists in the ruling government.

It will give the administration additional leverage to convince the Burma to stay on the right path.

The administration will still have the authority to waive or suspend the import ban as it has suspended sanctions on investment and financial services if the Government of Burma took the appropriate actions.

If we let the import ban expire, however, and Burma backslides on reform and democratization, we would have to pass a new law to re-impose the ban.

By passing this joint resolution, we ensure that the administration has the flexibility it needs to respond to events in Burma as it has done so with financial services and investment.

Suu Kyi herself has argued that "sanctions have been effective in persuading the government to go for change." I think renewing the import ban will push it to go further.

I urge my colleagues to support this joint resolution.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 489—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE APPOINTMENT BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF AN OUTSIDE SPECIAL COUNSEL TO INVESTIGATE CERTAIN RECENT LEAKS OF APPARENTLY CLASSIFIED AND HIGHLY SENSITIVE INFORMATION ON UNITED STATES MILITARY AND INTELLIGENCE PLANS, PROGRAMS, AND OPERATIONS

Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BURR, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. COBURN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 489

Whereas over the past few weeks, several publications have been released that cite several highly sensitive United States military and intelligence counterterrorism plans, programs, and operations;

Whereas these publications appear to be based in substantial part on unauthorized disclosures of classified information;

Whereas the unauthorized disclosure of classified information is a felony under Federal law;

Whereas the identity of the sources in these publications include senior administration officials, participants in these reported plans, programs, and operations, and current American officials who spoke anonymously about these reported plans, programs, and operations because they remain classified, parts of them are ongoing, or both;

Whereas such unauthorized disclosures may inhibit the ability of the United States to employ the same or similar plans, programs, or operations in the future; put at risk the national security of the United States and the safety of the men and women sworn to protect it; and dismay our allies;

Whereas under Federal law, the Attorney General may appoint an outside special counsel when an investigation or prosecution would present a conflict of interest or other extraordinary circumstances and when doing so would serve the public interest;

Whereas investigations of unauthorized disclosures of classified information are ordinarily conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation with assistance from prosecutors in the National Security Division of the Department of Justice;

Whereas there is precedent for officials in the National Security Division of the Department of Justice to recuse itself from such investigations to avoid even the appearance of impropriety or undue influence, and it appears that there have been such recusals with respect to the investigation of at least one of these unauthorized disclosures;

Whereas such recusals are indicative of the serious complications already facing the Department of Justice in investigating these matters;

Whereas the severity of the national security implications of these disclosures; the imperative for investigations of these disclosures to be conducted independently so as to avoid even the appearance of impropriety or undue influence; and the need to conduct these investigations expeditiously to ensure

timely mitigation constitute extraordinary circumstances; and

Whereas, for the foregoing reasons, the appointment of an outside special counsel would serve the public interest: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Attorney General should—

(A) delegate to an outside special counsel all of the authority of the Attorney General with respect to investigations by the Department of Justice of any and all unauthorized disclosures of classified and highly sensitive information related to various United States military and intelligence plans, programs, and operations reported in recent publications; and

(B) direct an outside special counsel to exercise that authority independently of the supervision or control of any officer of the Department of Justice;

(2) under such authority, the outside special counsel should investigate any and all unauthorized disclosures of classified and highly sensitive information on which such recent publications were based and, where appropriate, prosecute those responsible; and

(3) the President should assess—

(A) whether any such unauthorized disclosures of classified and highly sensitive information damaged the national security of the United States; and

(B) how such damage can be mitigated.

SENATE RESOLUTION 490—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2012, AS “MITOCHONDRIAL DISEASE AWARENESS WEEK”, REAFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ENHANCED AND COORDINATED RESEARCH EFFORT ON MITOCHONDRIAL DISEASES, AND COMMENDING THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH FOR ITS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE UNDERSTANDING OF MITOCHONDRIAL DISEASES

Mrs. BOXER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 490

Whereas Brittany Wilkinson, the first Youth Ambassador of the United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation, joined other Youth Ambassadors of the United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation in working tirelessly to raise awareness about mitochondrial diseases;

Whereas mitochondrial diseases result from a defect that reduces the ability of the mitochondria in a cell to produce energy;

Whereas, as mitochondria fail to produce enough energy, cells cease to function properly and eventually die, leading to the failure of organ systems and possibly the death of the affected individuals;

Whereas mitochondrial diseases can present themselves at any age, and mortality rates vary depending upon the particular disease;

Whereas the most severe mitochondrial diseases result in the progressive loss of function in multiple organs, including the loss of neurological and muscle function, and death within several years;

Whereas mitochondrial diseases are a relatively newly identified group of diseases, first recognized in the late 1960s, and diagnosis of mitochondrial diseases is extremely difficult;

Whereas there are more than 100 identified primary mitochondrial diseases, but re-

searchers believe there are several hundred other types of unidentified mitochondrial diseases and further research is necessary to help identify those diseases;

Whereas mitochondrial dysfunction is associated with many diseases, such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, autism, diabetes, cancer, and many other diseases associated with aging;

Whereas research into primary mitochondrial diseases can provide applications to biomedical research and a window into our understanding of many other diseases, including possible treatments and cures for diseases such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, autism, diabetes, cancer, and many other diseases associated with aging;

Whereas researchers estimate that one in 4,000 children will develop a mitochondrial disease related to an inherited mutation by 10 years of age, and recent studies of umbilical cord blood samples show that one in 200 people could develop a mitochondrial disease in their lifetime;

Whereas researchers also believe that those numbers could be much higher, given the difficulty associated with diagnosing mitochondrial disease and the many cases that are either misdiagnosed or never diagnosed;

Whereas there are no cures for mitochondrial diseases, nor are there specific treatments for any of those diseases;

Whereas human energy production involves multiple organ systems, and therefore primary mitochondrial diseases research involves many Institutes at the National Institutes of Health;

Whereas, according to the National Institutes of Health, more than \$600,000,000 is being spent on research related to mitochondrial functions, of which \$18,000,000 is being spent on actual primary mitochondrial diseases research;

Whereas the National Institutes of Health has taken an increased interest in primary mitochondrial diseases and has sponsored a number of activities in recent years aimed at advancing mitochondrial medicine, including incorporating research into functional variations in mitochondria in the Transformatory Research Awards Initiative;

Whereas, in March 2012, the National Institutes of Health convened a 2-day symposium entitled “Translational Research in Primary Mitochondrial Diseases: Obstacles and Opportunities”, which brought together leading government and private sector researchers and drug developers to share information related to primary mitochondrial diseases, develop systems to facilitate future collaboration, survey obstacles, needs, and priorities of primary mitochondrial diseases research, and develop mechanisms to enhance translation of basic science discoveries to diagnostics and therapeutics; and

Whereas, as a consequence of the symposium, a white paper has been developed that identifies current research challenges and impediments and a suggested course of action to address those challenges: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of September 16, 2012, as “Mitochondrial Disease Awareness Week”;

(2) reaffirms the importance of an enhanced and coordinated research effort aimed at improving the understanding of primary mitochondrial diseases and the development of treatments and cures;

(3) commends the National Institutes of Health for its efforts to organize the symposium entitled “Translational Research in