

3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2454

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2454 intended to be proposed to S. 3240, an original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2017, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2457

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2457 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. LUGAR:

S. 3310. A bill to direct the President, in consultation with the Department of State, United States Agency for International Development, Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the Department of Defense, to establish guidelines for United States foreign assistance programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, last week heads of state, key policymakers, and foreign aid implementers met in Washington to examine "Frontiers in Development." It was my pleasure to provide the conference keynote address Monday in which I pressed for greater transparency in global financial transactions and investments. This includes both U.S. foreign assistance funding and payments that companies make to foreign governments for oil, natural gas and mineral developments. Fuller disclosure improves accountability to citizens of both our country and the recipient country and would set an important example for other countries to provide more clarity about their own foreign assistance programs. Transparency in energy and mineral payments is already required for U.S.-listed companies by law in the Cardin-Lugar provision of the Dodd-Frank Act, and thanks to American leadership, the European Union is preparing similar legislation. Now, it is timely to enact legislation requiring the U.S. to disclose where and for what purpose it provides foreign assistance dollars across the globe. Further, taxpayers and foreign aid recipients have a right to know the impacts of these funds.

That is why I am introducing The Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act, which will require the President to disclose this information through a publicly accessible website in a timely manner.

The U.S. provides assistance through a host of federal agencies including the Departments of State, Defense and Agriculture, as well as agencies including the U.S. Agency for International De-

velopment, USAID, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, MCC. While our Federal budget is available for public review, there is currently no single source required by law where one can review in what amount and for what purpose U.S. dollars flow to individual countries and programs. President Obama early in his administration promised to bring more transparency to our international development programs. But so far, the efforts by the State Department, USAID, the MCC and others to display this information through the Foreign Assistance Dashboard have been inadequate. There is a meager amount of data on the Dashboard, and it is often woefully out of date.

My legislation is the identical version to that introduced earlier in this Congress by Congressman TED POE of Texas, which now has more than 50 House co-sponsors. I compliment Representative POE on the bill and appreciate the bipartisan support he has already garnered for it in the House. I look forward to working to enact the legislation in this Congress, bringing greater transparency and accountability to taxpayer funding of foreign assistance programs in a timely manner.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 3310

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act of 2012".

SEC. 2. GUIDELINES FOR UNITED STATES FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to evaluate the performance of United States foreign assistance programs and their contribution to policy, strategies, projects, program goals, and priorities undertaken by the Federal Government, to foster and promote innovative programs to improve the effectiveness of such programs, and to coordinate the monitoring and evaluation processes of Federal departments and agencies that administer such programs.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF GUIDELINES.—The President, in consultation with the Department of State, United States Agency for International Development, Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the Department of Defense, shall establish guidelines regarding the establishment of measurable goals, performance metrics, and monitoring and evaluation plans that can be applied on a uniform basis to United States foreign assistance programs, country assistance plans, and international and multilateral assistance programs receiving financial assistance from the United States. Such guidelines shall be established according to best practices of monitoring and evaluation studies and analyses.

(c) OBJECTIVES OF GUIDELINES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Such guidelines shall provide direction to Federal departments and agencies that administer United States foreign assistance programs on how to develop

the complete range of activities relating to the monitoring of resources, the evaluation of projects, the evaluation of program impacts, and analysis that is necessary for the identification of findings, generalizations that can be derived from those findings, and their applicability to proposed project and program design.

(2) OBJECTIVES.—Specifically, the guidelines shall provide direction on how to achieve the following objectives for monitoring and evaluation programs:

(A) Building measurable goals, performance metrics and monitoring and evaluation into program design at the outset, including the provision of sufficient program resources to conduct monitoring and evaluation.

(B) Disseminating guidelines for the development and implementation of monitoring and evaluation programs to all personnel, especially in the field, who are responsible for the design, implementation and management of foreign assistance programs.

(C) Developing a clearinghouse capacity for the dissemination of knowledge and lessons learned to United States development professionals, implementing partners, the international aid community, and aid recipient governments, and as a repository of knowledge on lessons learned.

(D) Distributing evaluation reports internally and making this material available online to the public. Furthermore, providing a summary including a description of methods, key findings and recommendations to the public on-line in a fully searchable form within 90 days after the completion of the evaluation. Principled exceptions will be made in cases of classified or proprietary material.

(E) Establishing annual monitoring and evaluation agendas and objectives that are responsive to policy and programmatic priorities.

(F) Applying rigorous monitoring and evaluation methodologies, choosing from among a wide variety of qualitative and quantitative methods common in the field of social scientific inquiry.

(G) Partnering with the academic community, implementing partners, and national and international institutions that have expertise in monitoring and evaluation and analysis when such partnerships will provide needed expertise or will significantly improve the evaluation and analysis.

(H) Developing and implementing a training plan for aid personnel on the proper conduct of monitoring and evaluation programs.

(d) ROLE OF OTHER FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—The President shall carry out this section in conjunction with the heads of Federal departments and agencies that administer United States foreign assistance programs.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to Congress a report that contains a detailed description of the guidelines that have been developed on measurable goals, performance metrics, and monitoring and evaluation plans for United States foreign assistance programs established under this section.

(f) EVALUATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term "evaluation" means, with respect to a United States foreign assistance program, the systematic collection and analysis of information about the characteristics and outcomes of the program and projects under the program as a basis for judgments, to improve effectiveness, and to inform decisions about current and future programming.

SEC. 3. INTERNET WEB SITE TO MAKE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE COMPREHENSIVE, TIMELY, COMPARABLE, AND ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION ON UNITED STATES FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT; PUBLICATION AND UPDATES.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall establish and maintain an Internet Web site to make publicly available comprehensive, timely, comparable, and accessible information on United States foreign assistance programs. The head of each Federal department or agency that administers such programs shall on a regular basis publish and update on the Web site such information with respect to the programs of the department or agency.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Such information shall be published on a detailed program-by-program basis and country-by-country basis.

(2) TYPES OF INFORMATION.—To ensure transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of United States foreign assistance programs, the information shall include country assistance strategies, annual budget documents, congressional budget justifications, actual expenditures, and reports and evaluations for such programs and projects under such programs. Each type of information described in this paragraph shall be published on the Web site not later than 30 days after the date of issuance of the information and shall be continuously updated.

(3) REPORT IN LIEU OF INCLUSION.—If the head of a Federal department or agency makes a determination that the inclusion of a required item of information on the Web site would jeopardize the health or security of an implementing partner or program beneficiary or would be detrimental to the national interests of the United States, such item of information may be submitted to Congress in a written report in lieu of including it on the Web site, along with the reasons for not including it in the database required under subsection (c)(2).

(c) SCOPE OF INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Web site shall contain such information relating to the current fiscal year and the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years.

(2) DATABASE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Web site shall also contain a link to a searchable database available to the public containing such information relating to fiscal years prior to the current fiscal year and the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years.

(B) LIMITATION.—The database shall not contain such information relating to fiscal years prior to fiscal year 2006.

(d) FORM.—Such information shall be published on the Web site in unclassified form. Any information determined to be classified information may be submitted to Congress in classified form and an unclassified summary of such information shall be published on the Web site.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 3313. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to women veterans, to improve health care furnished by the Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President today, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I introduce the Women Veterans and Other Health Care Improvement Act of 2012. I am incredibly proud of the women and men

who have served or are serving our nation in uniform, and I strongly believe we must do all that we can to honor them.

That is why I introduced legislation, which was signed into law as part of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010, which helped to transform the way that the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, addresses the needs of women veterans. Among other things, this law required the VA to provide neonatal care, train mental health professionals to provide mental health services for sexual trauma, and develop a child care pilot program. VA has an obligation to provide veterans with quality care and we have an obligation to make sure that VA does so. The legislation I am introducing today builds upon that effort to make additional improvements to VA's services for women veterans and veterans with families.

The nature of the current conflict and increasing use of improvised explosive devices leaves servicemembers, both male and female, at increased risk for blast injuries including spinal cord injury and trauma to the reproductive and urinary tracts. Army data shows that between 2003 and 2011 more than 600 women and men experienced these life-changing battle injuries while serving in Iraq or Afghanistan.

As they return from the battlefield, the VA system must be equipped to help injured veterans step back into their lives as parents, spouses, and citizens. These veterans have served honorably and have made the ultimate sacrifice for our great nation. They deserve the opportunity to pursue their goals and dreams, whether that includes pursuing higher education, finding gainful employment, purchasing their first house, or starting their own family. VA has many programs that help veterans pursue the educational, career, or homeownership dreams and goals that they deferred in service to this country, yet it falls short when it comes to helping severely wounded veterans who want to start a family. These veterans often need far more advanced services in order to conceive a child.

The Department of Defense and the Tricare program are already able to provide advanced fertility treatments, including assisted reproductive technology, to servicemembers with complex injuries. However; not all injured servicemembers are well situated to have a child at the time they are eligible for that coverage, and some are no longer eligible for Tricare by the time they are ready.

VA's fertility counseling and treatment options are limited and do not meet the complex needs of severely injured veterans. I have heard from severely injured veterans whose injuries have made it impossible for them to conceive children naturally. While the details of these stories vary, the common thread that runs through them all is that these veterans were unable to

obtain the type of assistance they need. Some have spent tens of thousands of dollars in the private sector to get the advanced reproductive treatments they need to start a family. Others have watched their marriage dissolve because the stress of infertility, in combination with the stresses of readjusting to life after severe injury, drove their relationship to a breaking point. Any servicemember who sustains this type of serious injury deserves so much more. It is our responsibility to give VA the tools it needs to serve them, and the Women Veterans and Other Health Care Improvement Act is a start at doing that.

This legislation also requires VA to build upon existing research framework to gain a better understanding of the long-term reproductive health care needs of veterans, from those who experience severe reproductive and urinary tract trauma to those who experience gender-specific infections in the battlefield. A recent Army Task Force Report found that women in the battlefield experience high rates of urinary tract infections and other women's health conditions. After a decade at war, many women servicemembers are still at increased risk for women's health difficulties due to deployment conditions and a lack of predeployment women's health information, compounded by privacy and safety concerns. Little is known about the impact that these issues and injuries have on the long-term health care needs of veterans. Additional research will provide critical information to help VA improve services for veterans.

VA has come a long way in addressing the unique health needs and challenges that women face. Yet for all of its recent progress, VA can and must do more to ensure that women veterans are receiving the care that they need and deserve. Work remains to make VA a friendly environment for women veterans and veterans with families. Many women veterans are single mothers, making it difficult for them to take full advantage of the services that VA offers. The Women Veterans and Other Health Care Improvement Act creates a pilot program that provides child care to veterans seeking readjustment counseling at VA's Vet Centers. It also helps VA ensure that women veterans can get the information that they need in order to access VA health care and benefits.

This is not a section by section review of all the provisions within this legislation. However, I have provided an appropriate overview of the major benefits of this legislation and how it would improve the lives of our veterans and their families. The promise that we make to our veterans is sacred and knows no gender. To honor our veterans, we must honor this promise for each and every one of them.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 3313

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Women Veterans and Other Health Care Improvements Act of 2012”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research.
- Sec. 3. Clarification that fertility counseling and treatment are medical services which the Secretary may furnish to veterans like other medical services.
- Sec. 4. Reproductive treatment and care delivery for spouses and surrogates of veterans.
- Sec. 5. Requirement to improve Department of Veterans Affairs women veterans call center.
- Sec. 6. Modification of pilot program on counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 7. Pilot programs on assistance for child care for certain veterans.

SEC. 2. FACILITATION OF REPRODUCTION AND INFERTILITY RESEARCH.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter II of chapter 73 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7330B. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research

“(a) **FACILITATION OF RESEARCH REQUIRED.**—The Secretary shall facilitate research conducted collaboratively by the Secretary of Defense and the Director of the National Institutes of Health to improve the ability of the Department of Veterans Affairs to meet the long-term reproductive health care needs of veterans who have a service-connected genitourinary disability or a condition that was incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service, such as spinal cord injury, that affects the veterans’ ability to reproduce.

“(b) **DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that information produced by the research facilitated under this section that may be useful for other activities of the Veterans Health Administration is disseminated throughout the Veterans Health Administration.”

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7330A the following new item:

“7330B. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research.”

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the research activities conducted by the Secretary under section 7330B of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 3. CLARIFICATION THAT FERTILITY COUNSELING AND TREATMENT ARE MEDICAL SERVICES WHICH THE SECRETARY MAY FURNISH TO VETERANS LIKE OTHER MEDICAL SERVICES.

Section 1701(6) of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(H) Fertility counseling and treatment, including treatment using assisted reproductive technology.”

SEC. 4. REPRODUCTIVE TREATMENT AND CARE DELIVERY FOR SPOUSES AND SURROGATES OF VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter VIII of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1787. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses and surrogates of veterans

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall furnish fertility counseling and treatment, including through the use of assisted reproductive technology, to a spouse or surrogate of a severely wounded veteran who has an infertility condition incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service and who is enrolled in the health care system established under section 1705(a) of this title if the spouse and the veteran apply jointly for such counseling and treatment through a process prescribed by the Secretary.

“(b) **COORDINATION OF CARE FOR OTHER SPOUSES AND SURROGATES.**—In the case of a spouse or surrogate of a veteran not described in subsection (a) who is seeking fertility counseling and treatment, the Secretary may coordinate fertility counseling and treatment for such spouse or surrogate.”

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1786 the following new section:

“1787. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses and surrogates of veterans.”

(c) **REGULATIONS.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall prescribe regulations to carry out section 1787 of title 38, United States Code, as added by paragraph (1).

SEC. 5. REQUIREMENT TO IMPROVE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WOMEN VETERANS CALL CENTER.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enhance the capabilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs women veterans call center—

(1) to respond to requests by women veterans for assistance with accessing health care and benefits furnished under laws administered by the Secretary; and

(2) for referral of such veterans to community resources to obtain assistance with services not furnished by the Department.

SEC. 6. MODIFICATION OF PILOT PROGRAM ON COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS FOR WOMEN VETERANS NEWLY SEPARATED FROM SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) **INCREASE IN NUMBER OF LOCATIONS.**—Subsection (c) of section 203 of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-163; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) is amended by striking “three locations” and inserting “14 locations”.

(b) **EXTENSION OF DURATION.**—Subsection (d) of such section is amended by striking “2-year” and inserting “four-year”.

SEC. 7. PILOT PROGRAMS ON ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS.

(a) **MODIFICATION OF DURATION OF PILOT PROGRAM ON ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS RECEIVING HEALTH CARE.**—Subsection (e) of section 205 of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-163; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended to read as follows:

“(e) **DURATION.**—A child care center that is established as part of the pilot program may operate until the date that is two years after the date on which the pilot program is estab-

lished in the third Veterans Integrated Service Network required by subsection (d).”

(b) **REQUIREMENT FOR PILOT PROGRAM ON ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS RECEIVING READJUSTMENT COUNSELING AND RELATED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.**—

(1) **PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing, subject to paragraph (2), assistance to qualified veterans described in paragraph (3) to obtain child care so that such veterans can receive readjustment counseling and related mental health services.

(2) **LIMITATION ON PERIOD OF PAYMENTS.**—Assistance may only be provided to a qualified veteran under the pilot program required by paragraph (1) for receipt of child care during the period that the qualified veteran receives readjustment counseling and related health care services at a Vet Center.

(3) **QUALIFIED VETERANS.**—For purposes of this subsection, a qualified veteran is a veteran who is—

(A) the primary caretaker of a child or children; and

(B)(i) receiving from the Department regular readjustment counseling and related mental health services; or

(ii) in need of readjustment counseling and related mental health services from the Department, and but for lack of child care services, would receive such counseling and services from the Department.

(4) **LOCATIONS.**—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program under this subsection in no fewer than three Readjustment Counseling Service Regions selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program.

(5) **DURATION.**—The pilot program under this subsection shall be carried out until the end of the two-year period beginning on the day on which the Secretary begins carrying out the pilot program at the last Readjustment Counseling Service Region selected under paragraph (4) at which the Secretary begins carrying out the pilot program.

(6) **FORMS OF CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Child care assistance under this subsection may include the following:

(i) Stipends for the payment of child care offered by licensed child care centers (either directly or through a voucher program) which shall be, to the extent practicable, modeled after the Department of Veterans Affairs Child Care Subsidy Program established pursuant to section 630 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law 107-67; 115 Stat. 552).

(ii) Payments to private child care agencies.

(iii) Collaboration with facilities or programs of other Federal departments or agencies.

(iv) Such other forms of assistance as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(B) **AMOUNTS OF STIPENDS.**—In the case that child care assistance under this subsection is provided as a stipend under subparagraph (A)(i), such stipend shall cover the full cost of such child care.

(7) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the pilot program required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot program. The report shall include the findings and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the pilot program, and shall include such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the pilot program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(8) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out the pilot program required by paragraph (1)

\$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 and 2015.

(9) VET CENTER DEFINED.—In this section, the term “Vet Center” means a center for re-adjustment counseling and related mental health services for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United States Code.

By Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WEBB, Mr. NELSON of Florida, and Mr. AKAKA):

S.J. Res. 45. A joint resolution amending title 36, United States Code, to designate June 19 as “Juneteenth Independence Day”; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger reached Galveston, Texas to announce that the Civil War had ended and that slaves had been emancipated.

It was a bittersweet day; the news traveled slowly, reaching Galveston nearly 2½ years after President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. But it was a joyous occasion, a triumph of freedom that has been remembered since. In commemoration of that historic day, I am delighted to introduce a Joint Resolution designating June 19 as “Juneteenth Independence Day,” a National Day of Observance.

It is a day to reflect on history and to celebrate freedom. To remember, in the words of W. E. B. Du Bois, that “The cost of liberty is less than the price of repression.”

This resolution offers recognition of the role that Juneteenth Independence Day has played in African-American culture in Texas and throughout the Southwest. Enshrining Juneteenth in our national consciousness will confer the recognition it merits and serve as inspiration for all Americans. I am proud to be part of this bipartisan joint resolution to commemorate this day that reminds us that in America, we are all blessed to live in freedom.

United States law provides for the declaration of selected public observances by the President of the United States as designated by Congress or at the discretion of the President. I believe that marking Juneteenth Independence Day as a National Day of Observance will honor freedom and liberty, something that Americans of all races, creeds, and ethnic backgrounds can celebrate.

This legislation is an important reminder of that extraordinary day in 1865, a day that carried liberty across America. My fellow Texan Barbara Jordan once said, “A nation is formed by the willingness of each of us to share in the responsibility for upholding the common good.” There is no plainer common good than commemorating American freedom. I encourage all of my colleagues to join in cosponsoring this resolution.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 496—OBSERVING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WEBB, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WICKER, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 496

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States, and in particular the Southwestern States, for more than 2½ years after President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, which was issued on January 1, 1863, and months after the conclusion of the Civil War;

Whereas, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved were free;

Whereas African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as “Juneteenth Independence Day”, as the anniversary of their emancipation;

Whereas African Americans from the Southwest continue the tradition of celebrating Juneteenth Independence Day as inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Whereas, for more than 145 years, Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures; and

Whereas the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves remain an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate—

(A) recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day to the Nation;

(B) supports the continued celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the Nation; and

(C) encourages the people of the United States to observe Juneteenth Independence Day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs; and

(2) it is the sense of the Senate that—

(A) the celebration of the end of slavery is an important and enriching part of the history and heritage of the United States; and

(B) history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future.

SENATE RESOLUTION 497—CONGRATULATING THE LOS ANGELES KINGS ON WINNING THE 2012 STANLEY CUP CHAMPIONSHIP

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. BOXER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 497

Whereas, on June 11, 2012, the Los Angeles Kings were crowned National Hockey League champions after defeating the New Jersey Devils by a score of 6-1 in Game 6 of the 2012 Stanley Cup Finals;

Whereas this is the first Stanley Cup title that the Los Angeles Kings have won since the team entered the National Hockey League in 1967;

Whereas the Los Angeles Kings are the first 8th seeded playoff team to win the Stanley Cup;

Whereas the Los Angeles Kings never allowed an opposing team with a higher seed or home-ice advantage to intimidate them;

Whereas, en route to their first Stanley Cup appearance since 1993, the Los Angeles Kings quickly dispatched the defending Western Conference Champions, the Vancouver Canucks, dominated the upstart St. Louis Blues, and defeated the Phoenix Coyotes, who were the Pacific Division Champions;

Whereas Los Angeles Kings forward Dustin Brown is the first American team captain of a Stanley Cup champion since 1999;

Whereas Los Angeles Kings goalie Jonathan Quick performed admirably in each playoff game, totaling 125 saves and maintaining a .946 save percentage during the Stanley Cup Finals, and winning the Conn Smythe Trophy, which is awarded to the player considered most valuable to his team during the Stanley Cup Playoffs;

Whereas each of the 26 players on the Los Angeles Kings playoff roster should receive recognition, including Most Valuable Player of the Stanley Cup Playoffs Jonathan Quick, team captain Dustin Brown, Jonathan Bernier, Jeff Carter, Kyle Clifford, Drew Doughty, David Drewis, Colin Fraser, Simon Gagne, Matt Greene, Dwight King, Anze Kopitar, Trevor Lewis, Andrei Loktionov, Alec Martinez, Willie Mitchell, Jordan Nolan, Scott Parse, Dustin Penner, Mike Richards, Brad Richardson, Rob Scuderi, Jarret Stoll, Slava Voynov, Kevin Westgarth, and Justin Williams; and

Whereas team owners Philip Anschutz and Edward Roski, General Manager Dean Lombardi, and head coach Darryl Sutter admirably assembled the team that comprised the 2012 Los Angeles Kings and led them through one dominant performance after another in the 2012 Stanley Cup Playoffs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Los Angeles Kings on winning the 2012 Stanley Cup Championship; and

(2) commends the Los Angeles Kings fans in California and across the Nation for showing the team support throughout its 45-year history.

SENATE RESOLUTION 498—DESIGNATING JUNE 20, 2012, AS “AMERICAN EAGLE DAY”, AND CELEBRATING THE RECOVERY AND RESTORATION OF THE BALD EAGLE, THE NATIONAL SYMBOL OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. INOUE, Mr. COONS, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CORKER, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. SESSIONS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to: