

(CBP Dec. 12–20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 5, 2012; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–8507. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8508. A communication from the Director of the Regulation Policy and Management Office of the General Counsel, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Contracts and Provider Agreements for State Home Nursing Home Care" (RIN2900–AO57) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 5, 2012; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Katherine Polk Failla, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Troy L. Nunley, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of California.

Sheri Polster Chappell, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Pamela Ki Mai Chen, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

Mark A. Barnett, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade. Patrick J. Wilkerson, of Oklahoma, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Oklahoma for the term of four years.

Louise W. Kelton, of Tennessee, to be United States Marshal for the Middle District of Tennessee for the term of four years.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 3663. A bill to reassert the proper role of Congress in closing or realigning military installations; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. REID:

S. 3664. A bill to provide for debt limit extensions; read the first time.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 3665. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide information to foster youth on their potential eligibility for Federal student aid; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 3666. A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to modify the definition of "exhibitor"; considered and passed.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. SNOWE):

S. Res. 611. A resolution designating December 15, 2012, as "Wreaths Across America Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. COATS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. HELLER, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. LEE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RISC, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. Con. Res. 61. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that a carbon tax is not in the economic interest of the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. HAGAN, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. Con. Res. 62. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that our current tax incentives for retirement savings provide important benefits to Americans to help plan for a financially secure retirement; to the Committee on Finance.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 845

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 845, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the logical flow of return information between partnerships, corporations, trusts, estates, and individuals to better enable each party to submit timely, accurate returns and reduce the need for extended and amended returns, to provide for modified due dates by regulation, and to conform the automatic corporate extension period to long-standing regulatory rule.

S. 3608

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3608, a bill to modernize voter registration, promote access to voting for individuals with disabilities, protect the ability of individuals to exercise the right to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REID:

S. 3664. A bill to provide for debt limit extensions; read the first time.

Mr. REID. 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. 3664

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

SEC. 1. DEBT LIMIT EXTENSION.

Subsection (b) of section 3101 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking "as provided by law through the congressional budget process described in Rule XLIX of the Rules of the House of Representatives or as provided by section 3101A or otherwise." and inserting "as provided—

"(1) by law through the congressional budget process described in Rule XLIX of the Rules of the House of Representatives or as provided by section 3101A or otherwise, or

"(2) by executive order of the President. An executive order issued pursuant to paragraph (2) shall be considered as a major rule for purposes of chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code."

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 3665. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide information to foster youth on their potential eligibility for Federal student aid; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, we currently have over 400,000 children in our foster care system due to abuse or neglect by their biological families, with 104,000 eligible for adoption. Tragically every year nearly 28,000 of these children age out of our foster care system with no place to call home. On average, foster children spend over 3 years in the system and around 16 percent languish in the foster care system for over 5 years. Only around 3 percent start college and even fewer finish their degree. We must continue working to connect children in our foster system to a safe, loving, and permanent home while also doing more to address their educational outcomes.

I am greatly concerned that too many of our Nation's foster youth are unable to appropriately access critical Federal programs that provide assistance to help increase their educational opportunities. Higher education can hold the key to a future of stability and it is unacceptable that many foster youth who are eligible for higher education funds, such as Education and Training Vouchers, ETV, and support through the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, are never told about these programs.

This is why I have worked with my colleagues to introduce a bipartisan bill to direct the Department of Education to fully utilize the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, FAFSA, as a tool to notify foster youth of all Federal funds which may be available to support their pursuit of higher education, and include information specifically for foster youth on their agency website. The Foster Youth Higher Education Opportunities Act will automate the notification to foster youth of their potential eligibility for programs that serve as a lifeline to a better future.

I would like to recognize Senators INHOFE, FRANKEN, LEVIN, MURRAY,

CARDIN, BLUMENTHAL, BEGICH, ROCKEFELLER, and LANDRIEU as original cosponsors of this bill. I ask all of my colleagues to support this important legislation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 611—DESIGNATING DECEMBER 15, 2012, AS “WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY”

Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. SNOWE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 611

Whereas, 21 years ago, the Wreaths Across America project began an annual tradition, during the month of December, of donating, transporting, and placing Maine balsam fir holiday wreaths on the graves of the fallen heroes buried at Arlington National Cemetery;

Whereas, since that tradition began, through the hard work and generosity of the individuals involved in the Wreaths Across America project, more than 350,000 wreaths have been sent to more than 800 locations, including national cemeteries and veterans memorials in every State, and to locations overseas;

Whereas the mission of the Wreaths Across America project to “Remember, Honor, Teach” is carried out in part by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery as well as veterans cemeteries and other locations in all 50 States;

Whereas the Wreaths Across America project carries out a week-long veterans parade between Maine and Virginia, stopping along the way to spread a message about the importance of remembering the fallen heroes of the United States, honoring those who serve, and teaching the people of the United States about the sacrifices made by veterans and their families to preserve our freedoms;

Whereas, in 2011, wreaths were sent to more than 700 locations across the United States and overseas, 180 more locations than the previous year;

Whereas, in December 2012, the Patriot Guard Riders, a motorcycle and motor vehicle group that is dedicated to patriotic events and includes more than 250,000 members nationwide, will continue their tradition of escorting a tractor-trailer filled with donated wreaths from Harrington, Maine, to Arlington National Cemetery;

Whereas thousands of individuals volunteer each December to escort and lay the wreaths;

Whereas December 10, 2011, was previously designated by the Senate as “Wreaths Across America Day”; and

Whereas the Wreaths Across America project will continue its proud legacy on December 15, 2012, bringing approximately 125,000 wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery on that day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates December 15, 2012, as “Wreaths Across America Day”;;

(2) honors the Wreaths Across America project, the Patriot Guard Riders, and all of the volunteers and donors involved in this worthy tradition; and

(3) recognizes the sacrifices our veterans, members of the Armed Forces, and their families have made, and continue to make, for our great Nation.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 61—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT A CARBON TAX IS NOT IN THE ECONOMIC INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. VITTER (for himself, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. COATS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. HELLER, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. LEE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. WICKER) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. CON. RES. 61

Whereas a carbon tax is regressive in nature and would unfairly burden those vulnerable individuals and families in the United States that are already struggling under a stagnating economy;

Whereas a carbon tax would increase the cost of every good manufactured in the United States;

Whereas a carbon tax would harm the entire United States manufacturing sector;

Whereas the increase in production of domestic energy resources on private and State-owned land has created significant job growth and private capital investment; and

Whereas affordable and reliable energy sources are critical to maintaining the United States’ global competitiveness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that a carbon tax would be detrimental to American families and businesses, and is not in the interest of the United States.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 62—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS THAT OUR CURRENT TAX INCENTIVES FOR RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROVIDE IMPORTANT BENEFITS TO AMERICANS TO HELP PLAN FOR A FINANCIALLY SECURE RETIREMENT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. HAGAN, and Mr. BOOZMAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. CON. RES. 62

Whereas private retirement plans in the United States paid out over \$3,824,000,000,000 in benefits from 2000 through 2009, while public sector retirement plans paid out \$2,651,000,000,000 during the same period, with both playing an essential role in providing retirement income for millions of our Nation’s senior citizens;

Whereas there are approximately 670,000 private-sector defined contribution plans that are currently covering 67,000,000 participants, and over 48,000 private-sector defined benefit plans covering 19,000,000 participants;

Whereas \$4,700,000,000,000 is held in 401(k), 403(b), 457 and similar defined contribution plans, \$2,300,000,000,000 is held in private defined benefit plans, and another \$4,900,000,000,000 is held in Individual Retirement Accounts, largely consisting of funds rolled over from employer-based retirement plans;

Whereas from 2000 through 2009, employers have contributed almost \$3,500,000,000,000 to public and private retirement plans;

Whereas tax incentives are an important impetus for individuals to save for retirement and for employers to offer plans under our voluntary system;

Whereas generally, the taxation of amounts contributed to pension and retirement plans is simply deferred, not lost;

Whereas more than 70 percent of American workers making between \$30,000 and \$50,000 a year contribute to their own retirement when covered by a retirement plan at work;

Whereas under current law, if business owners and managers sponsor a retirement plan, they also must cover and provide benefits to lower-income and middle-income employees;

Whereas 401(k) and similar defined contribution plans have been enhanced over the years by Congress on a bipartisan basis;

Whereas the private retirement system in the United States is voluntary and is dependent on the willingness of business owners and corporations to adopt and maintain retirement plans; and

Whereas the United States system of employer-based retirement savings is designed to work together with other personal savings and the Social Security program to provide meaningful income replacement upon retirement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) tax incentives for retirement savings play an important role in encouraging employers to sponsor and maintain retirement plans and encouraging participants to contribute to such plans;

(2) existing tax incentives have increased the number of Americans who are covered by a retirement plan; and

(3) a reformed and simplified Federal tax code should include properly structured tax incentives to maintain and contribute to such plans and to strengthen retirement security for all Americans.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on December 6, 2012, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Oversight of FHA: Examining HUD’s Response to Fiscal Challenges.”

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on December 6, 2012, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND MERCHANT MARINE INFRASTRUCTURE, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation