

Interstate Transport of PM2.5 and Ozone; Correction" (FRL No. 9763-3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8621. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Permits for Major Stationary Sources and Major Modifications Locating in Prevention of Significant Deterioration Areas and Permits for Major Stationary Sources Locating in Nonattainment Areas or the Ozone Transport Region" (FRL No. 9763-4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8622. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 12-143, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. KOHL, from the Special Committee on Aging:

Special Report entitled "Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia: A Comparison of International Approaches" (Rept. No. 112-254).

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

Report to accompany S. 1980, a bill to prevent, deter, and eliminate illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing through port State measures (Rept. No. 112-255).

Report to accompany S. 2388, a bill to reauthorize and amend the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 112-256).

By Mr. LIEBERMAN, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1910. A bill to provide benefits to domestic partners of Federal employees (Rept. No. 112-257).

S. 241. A bill to expand whistleblower protections to non-Federal employees whose disclosures involve misuse of Federal funds.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment:

S. 1100. A bill to amend title 41, United States Code, to prohibit inserting politics into the Federal acquisition process by prohibiting the submission of political contribution information as a condition of receiving a Federal contract.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

S. 2234. A bill to prevent human trafficking in government contracting.

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 Mr. TOOMEY:

S. 3690. A bill to require the Government Accountability Office to include in its annual report to Congress a list of the most common grounds for sustaining protests relating to bids for contracts; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. LAUTENBERG):

S. 3691. A bill to minimize the economic and social costs resulting from losses of life, property, well-being, business activity, and economic growth associated with extreme weather events by ensuring that the United States is more resilient to the impacts of extreme weather events in the short- and long-term, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 3692. A bill to amend title 32, United States Code, to authorize National Guard support for State and local efforts to keep schools safe from violence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 3693. A bill to enhance the safety of America's schools; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 3694. A bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to enhance existing programs providing mitigation assistance by encouraging States to adopt and actively enforce State building codes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 3695. A bill to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 3696. A bill to provide for the admission of the State of New Columbia into the Union; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 3697. A bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act relating to certain mercury compounds, products, and processes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. AKAKA, and Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts):

S. 3698. A bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to improve veterans service organizations access to Federal surplus personal property; 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. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. VITTER):

S. Res. 625. A resolution recognizing the January 12, 2013, opening of the United States Freedom Pavilion: The Boeing Center at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, and supporting plans for other educational pavilions and initiatives; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. WEBB, and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. Con. Res. 65. A concurrent resolution congratulating the Navy and the current and former officers and crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise (CVN 65) on completion of the 25th and final deployment of the vessel; to the Committee on Armed Services.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 32

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 32, a bill to prohibit the transfer or possession of large capacity ammunition feeding devices, and for other purposes.

S. 35

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 35, a bill to establish background check procedures for gun shows.

S. 998

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 998, a bill to amend title IV of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to require the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, in the case of airline pilots who are required by regulation to retire at age 60, to compute the actuarial value of monthly benefits in the form of a life annuity commencing at age 60.

S. 1709

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1709, a bill to temporarily reduce interest rates for certain small business disaster loans, and for other purposes.

S. 2134

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2134, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for certain requirements relating to the retirement, adoption, care and recognition of military working dogs, and for other purposes.

S. 3280

At the request of Mr. JOHANNES, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3280, a bill to preserve the companionship services exemption for minimum wage and overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

S. 3518

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3518, a bill to make it a principal negotiating objective of the United States in trade negotiations to eliminate government fisheries subsidies, and for other purposes.

S. 3623

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr.

MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3623, a bill to extend the authorizations of appropriations for certain national heritage areas, and for other purposes.

S. 3635

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3635, a bill to provide incentives for States to invest in practices and technology that are designed to expedite voting at the polls and to simplify voter registration.

S. CON. RES. 62

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. RES. 613

At the request of Mr. LIEBERMAN, the names of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 613, a resolution urging the governments of Europe and the European Union to designate Hizballah as a terrorist organization and impose sanctions, and urging the President to provide information about Hizballah to the European allies of the United States and to support to the Government of Bulgaria in investigating the July 18, 2012, terrorist attack in Burgas.

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 613, *supra*.

S. RES. 618

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 618, a resolution observing the 100th birthday of civil rights icon Rosa Parks and commemorating her legacy.

AMENDMENT NO. 3344

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3344 proposed to H.R. 1, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3349

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3349 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3367

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3367 proposed to H.R. 1, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3381

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3381 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND and Mr. LAUTENBERG):

S. 3691. A bill to minimize the economic and social costs resulting from losses of life, property, well-being, business activity, and economic growth associated with extreme weather events by ensuring that the United States is more resilient to the impacts of extreme weather events in the short- and long-term, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today I am introducing the STRONG Act of 2012, or the Strengthening The Resilience of Our National on the Ground Act. This legislation will build upon existing extreme weather resiliency efforts to provide State and local actors with the tools and information they need to help prepare, plan for, and more quickly recover from extreme weather events. Hurricane Sandy has shown us that extreme weather remains a major challenge for our Nation.

Recently, extreme weather events have battered the nation, resulting in record-high losses for 2011 and more broken records in 2012. In the past 30 years, there have been more than 130 extreme weather events in the United States that generated at least \$1 billion in devastating damages. Most recently, Hurricane Sandy resulted in more than 100 deaths, the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of people, power outages affecting more than 8.5 million homes, massive flooding, gasoline shortages, and a crippled regional energy and transportation infrastructure. Extreme weather ravaged every region of the United States this year, with drought conditions in more than 60 percent of the contiguous United States; deadly floods; destructive wildfires on more than nine million acres across 37 States; and deadly heat waves.

By building stronger communities, we can reduce the serious economic and human costs of extreme weather over the short and long term. For every \$1 spent now on disaster preparedness and resilience-building, we could avoid at least \$4 in future losses. We need to make our Nation stronger and more resilient against extreme weather or face an increasingly more expensive and deadly future.

The STRONG Act of 2012 will use existing Federal resources to help reduce future losses of life, property, and well-being. It will also help limit declines in regional economic growth due to disasters. Specifically, it directs the Federal Government to create a more comprehensive approach to planning for and supporting resiliency efforts due to extreme weather. The bill directs the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to chair a high-level interagency working group to assess Federal agencies' activities related to extreme weather resilience across key sectors, such as agriculture, water management, infrastructure, public health, and national security. It develops a plan to better support State, local, and private and public sector resiliency efforts in the short and long-term, including establishing a public clearinghouse of information. The bill emphasizes State, local, and private sector involvement; a Federal advisory group composed of private and public representatives will play a key consultative role throughout the process, as will an advisory group composed of State, local, and tribal representatives. It also complements and builds upon recent activities by my colleagues and the White House in the Federal response to the devastation of Hurricane Sandy.

I believe that by better understanding and planning, we can reduce the serious economic and human costs of extreme weather on our communities. The events of 2012 and years past have clearly demonstrated the need for better and more efficient governance before disaster strikes again.

A number of organizations are supportive of this bill, including the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Association of Counties, the National Emergency Management Association, the National Weather Association, and the American Planning Association.

I am pleased that Senators GILLIBRAND and LAUTENBERG are original cosponsors of this legislation. I look forward to building upon a strong foundation and improving our extreme weather resiliency efforts. It is our responsibility to protect our citizens and help minimize future loss and damage. I ask all Senators to support this legislation.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 3696. A bill to provide for the admission of the State of New Columbia into the Union; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.