(Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNS) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 65, a resolution strongly supporting the full implementation of United States and international sanctions on Iran and urging the President to continue to strengthen enforcement of sanctions legislation.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 454. A bill to promote the development of local strategies to coordinate use of assistance under sections 8 and 9 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 with public and private resources, to enable eligible families to achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing the Family Self-Sufficiency Act, and I am pleased this Congress to be joined in this effort by my colleague, Senator BLUNT of Missouri.

The Family Self Sufficiency, FSS, program is an existing Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD, employment and savings incentive initiative for families that have section 8 vouchers or live in public housing. The FSS program provides two key tools for its participants: first, it provides access to the resources and training that help participants pursue employment opportunities and meet financial goals, and second, it encourages FSS families to save by establishing an interest-bearing escrow account for them. Upon graduation from the FSS program, the family can use these savings to pay for job-related expenses, such as additional workforce training or the purchase or maintenance of a car needed for commuting purposes.

Our bipartisan legislation seeks to enhance the FSS program by streamlining the administration of this program, by broadening the supportive services that can be provided to a participant, and by extending the FSS program to tenants who live in privately-owned properties with project-based assistance. In short, we seek to make the FSS program easier to administer and more effective.

First, to streamline the FSS program, our bill would combine two separate FSS programs into one. Today, HUD operates one FSS program for those families served by the Housing Choice Voucher Program and another for those families served by the Public Housing program. This is the case even though the core purpose of each FSS program, to increase economic independence and self-sufficiency, is the same. Unfortunately, Public Housing Agencies, PHA, have to operate essentially two programs to achieve the same goal. With our bill, PHAs would be relieved of this unnecessary burden.

Second, our legislation broadens the scope of the supportive services that may be offered to include attainment of a GED, education in pursuit of a post-secondary degree or certification, and training in financial literacy. Providing families in need with affordable rental housing is critical, but coupling it with the support and services to help families get ahead increases the effectiveness of this federal investment. Our legislation makes it easier for FSS participants to obtain the training necessary to secure employment and the education to make prudent financial decisions to better safeguard their earnings.

Lastly, our bill opens up the FSS program to families who live in privately-owned properties subsidized with project-based rental assistance. It shouldn't matter what kind of housing assistance a family gets, and families seeking to achieve self-sufficiency shouldn't be held back by this sort of technicality.

I thank Senator BLUNT for his partnership, and I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, which will help give those receiving housing assistance a better chance to build their skills and achieve economic independence.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. JOHANNS):

S. 458. A bill to improve and extend certain nutrition programs; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, my colleagues, I rise today to introduce a bill that has a long title: Improve Nutrition Program Integrity and Deficit Reduction Act of 2013. Big title, but it is a good bill.

Last June, I stood in this body, along with Chairperson STABENOW of the Agriculture Committee, to encourage my colleagues to pass bipartisan reform legislation known as the farm bill.

The legislation we put together in the Senate Agriculture Committee would have strengthened and preserved the safety net for our farmers and ranchers while also being responsible to taxpayers by providing billions of dollars for deficit reduction. At the time we were told by the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, that the farm bill passed by the Agriculture Committee, one of the first bills, by the way, that we were able to pass under regular order and in record amount of time, 2½ days—the CBO estimated at that time the farm bill that was passed by the Agriculture Committee in the Senate would save $24 billion over 10 years, including $4 billion from the nutrition title.

However, according to the latest CBO projections, a projection that has reverberated in farm country, released just last Friday, the farm bill we passed last year would now only save $13 billion and no longer represents savings in the nutrition title. We could have done more last year, and we must do more this year to rein in the largest expenditure within the Department of Agriculture budget.

No, it does not go to farmers. We are talking about specifically the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, called SNAP, more commonly known as food stamps.

In the context of sequestration, SNAP was exempted from any across-the-board cuts, along with Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. It was in that pasture. A lot of other things were in different pastures, especially national security.

However, it is clear there are several areas within the program that could provide significant savings that were, unfortunately, left untouched. The legislation I introduce today, along with Senator JOHANNS and Senator THUNE, builds off of several amendments previously offered in a piecemeal fashion. We have wrapped them all together. Each should be enacted, but combined in this bill they represent over $36 billion in savings.

By eliminating loopholes, duplicative programs, unnecessary bonuses, inflation adjustments, and restricting lottery winners from receiving benefits, this legislation will instill and restore integrity to SNAP while still providing benefits to those truly in need. I ought to repeat that this restores integrity to SNAP while still providing benefits to those truly in need.

I am not proposing a dramatic change in the policy of nutrition programs. Instead, this legislation enforces the principles of good government and returns SNAP spending to much more responsible levels. While saving over $36 billion, our legislation also makes commonsense and comprehensive reforms to SNAP, the Food Stamp Program, that can and should be enacted immediately.

Over one-half of the SNAP food benefits in our country are utilized by households with children, and SNAP can play, and does play, a critical role in helping people put food on the table in times of need. However, at least 17 States, I am sorry to report, 17 States are gaming the system by designing their Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program—the acronym for that is

LIHEAP, a very commonly used term with regards to nutrition programs and the energy programs. But these 17 States designed their programs to exploit the Food Stamp Program. This is not right. It is not right.

The LIHEAP loophole works like this: A participating State agency annually issues extremely low LIHEAP benefits to qualify otherwise ineligible households for standard utility allowances, which then result in increased monthly food stamp benefits. For example, today a State agency can issue only $1 annually in LIHEAP benefits to increase monthly food stamp benefits on an average of $90 a month. That is $1,080 per year for households that do not otherwise pay out-of-pocket utility bills.

That is not right. Last year the Senate farm bill included a provision to tighten the LIHEAP loophole. Even though it would only reduce the loophole, it set the minimum qualifying LIHEAP benefit at $10 annually—not $1, $10. At the time it would have saved taxpayers nearly $450 million every year for a total of $4 billion over a 10-year period.

Completely eliminating the LIHEAP loophole, as my legislation does, will save taxpayers $12 billion. Let me be very clear about it. Eliminating the LIHEAP loophole does not affect SNAP eligibility for anyone using the Food Stamp Program. Eliminating the LIHEAP loophole would only decrease SNAP benefits for those who would not otherwise qualify for the higher SNAP benefits, the food stamp benefits.

Let me point out another area that must be reformed: States using categorical eligibility for automatic eligibility to provide food stamp benefits. Categorical eligibility is simply known as Cat-El. It was designed to help streamline the administration of SNAP by allowing households to be certified as eligible for the food stamp benefits and be certified without evaluating household assets or gross income, a previous requirement.

Now, 42 States, unfortunately—I do not like to report these kinds of things. However, 42 States are exploiting an unintended loophole of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program and simply provided informational brochures and informational 1–800 numbers to maximize the food stamp enrollment and the corresponding increase in Federal food benefits.

These States are gaming the system to bring otherwise ineligible SNAP participants into the program. My legislation ties categorical eligibility to cash assistance, thereby eliminating this loophole. That saves taxpayers $11.5 billion, a lot of money. To be clear, this represents a cut to SNAP food benefits. However, this amount represents the amount of benefits to people who would not otherwise be eligible for these benefits were it not for States gaming the system.

In an ongoing effort to streamline government programs and reduce redundancy and taxpayer spending, we should also look at the unnecessary spending in Federal employment and training programs. According to a GAO report last year, there are currently 47 such programs that annually cost $18 billion. Let me repeat that. There are 47 programs annually costing $18 billion—Federal employment and training programs.

Nobody would object to a Federal employment and training program given the problems we have with our country. But 47, according to a GAO report, $18 billion. Eliminating the duplicative SNAP employment and training programs would save more than $4 billion and would not affect SNAP food benefits. I repeat. This provision of this legislation would not cut the buying power of any food stamp household to put food in their refrigerators and also their kitchen cupboards.

What am I talking about? In addition to the base program funding that we are talking about with employment and training help, States have the option of providing their own funding to their State education and training program. Then the Department of Agriculture is required to match that.

Currently, four States receive over 80 percent of the total 50–50 match funding. Four States, 80 percent? What about the rest of the States? They include New York, California, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. New York, 36, 37, percent; California, 21 percent; Pennsylvania, about 13 percent; New Jersey, about 10.

This optional 50–50 Federal match is uncapped. It can be used by States to provide reimbursement for participant expenses in regard to education and training that are deemed reasonable and necessary. But somebody has to define ''reasonable and necessary.'' The following items have come under ''reasonable and necessary,'' especially in these four States: union dues, test fees, clothing and tools required for the job, relocation expenses, licensing, bonding fees, transportation, childcare, tennis lessons. I made that up. I thought it would catch your attention, Mr. President. No, there are no tennis lessons. There might be, could be. But at least in regards to this reform, let's go to another provision of my legislation.

It ends the USDA practice of giving $48 million in awards every year to State agencies for basically doing their job to ensure proper use of the American tax dollar. Currently, bonuses are given to States for ''best program access,'' signing up as many people for food stamps as possible. ''Most improved program access.'' How many more people signed up for SNAP compared to the previous year? So if you sign up more people then you signed up last year, well, you get an award. ''Best application timeliness.'' That is handling applications within the required guidelines, and we are getting a benefit from that.

State agencies are rewarded for performing the minimum expectations for stewardship of the Food Stamp Program and also of the American tax dollar. The bonuses are not even required to be used for food stamp administration. A recipient State may choose the funding for any State priority. So we are talking about $48 million.

That goes to State agencies of these four Oscar Awards in regard to food stamps, but they can use the funding for anything, for any State priority. Eliminating these unnecessary State bonuses will save taxpayers, over 10 years, $480 million.

Another area where my legislation streamlines government programs is through the elimination of the SNAP Nutrition Education Grant Program. A number of existing nutrition education programs are delivered more equitably with a cost-benefit ratio that makes more sense, at least six Federal programs administered by the Department of Agriculture and the National Institutes of Health and Land Grant University Extension Programs.

In practice, the SNAP Nutrition Education Program is inequitably distributed with the top four States—here we go again—receiving over 54 percent of the funding. The bottom 33 State agencies receive less than 1 percent of the total funding. That is not right.

Additionally our bill ends inflation adjustments for countable resources and for emergency food assistance, saving over $600 million.

The legislation also terminates the ongoing stimulus of several years ago enacted by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which provided extra funding to increase monthly SNAP food benefits.

Finally, the legislation does prohibit lottery winners—Senator STABENOW insisted on this in the last farm bill and it makes a lot of sense—from receiving SNAP benefits and keeps them from receiving new benefits if they do not meet the financial requirements of SNAP.

Overall, by eliminating several duplicative programs, closing loopholes, and ending unnecessary spending, the Improve Nutrition Program Integrity and Deficit Reduction Act will save taxpayers over $36 billion, the latest score by the CBO.

I understand the importance of domestic food assistance programs for many hard-working Americans, including many Kansans. I know that. In 1996, when I was chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, there was an effort to send the Food Stamp Program back to the States—and the Governors wanted it. They wanted the money, they didn't want the food stamps. We made an effort under a very historic farm bill at that time not only to save and reform but restore integrity to the Food Stamp Program. We have another opportunity right now. I do understand the importance of domestic food assistance programs for many hard-working Americans and Kansans.

My goal is very simple, again restoring integrity to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in a commonsense and comprehensive manner. Enacting this package of reforms will allow the Federal Government to continue to help those who truly need SNAP food benefits and assistance.

Again, I thank Senators THUNE and JOHANNS for their assistance in this effort. I look forward to working with my colleagues to enact these reforms for the benefit of all Americans.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. BROWN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. COWAN):

S. 460. A bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, for several years now I have come to the floor to talk about the need to bolster the middle class in this country and restore the American Dream. The American Dream is supposed to be about building a better life. If you work hard and play by the rules, you should be able to support your family, join the middle class, and provide a bright future for your children.

But tens of millions of hardworking Americans who are earning at or near the minimum wage are not only struggling to reach the middle class and achieve the American Dream, they are falling behind. We need to do more to support these workers as they try to build opportunity for their families and their futures. A critical first step is to ensure that they earn a fair day's pay for a hard day's work. That is why today I am joining with Congressman GEORGE MILLER to introduce the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013 to raise the minimum wage.

Our bill will do three things: first, it will gradually increase the minimum wage to $10.10 an hour in three annual steps. Second, our bill will link future increases in the minimum wage to the cost of living, through the Consumer Price Index, so that people who are trying to get ahead don't fall behind as our economy grows. Finally, our bill will—for the first time in more than 20 years—raise the minimum wage for workers who earn tips, from a paltry $2.13 per hour to a level that is 70 percent of the regular minimum wage. This will be gradually phased in over the course of 6 years, which will give businesses time to adjust while providing more fairness for hardworking people in tipped industries.

These raises are long overdue. Over the past several decades, average wages in this country have stagnated, but the minimum wage has actually declined in real terms. It has not kept up with costs, average wages, or rapid growth in productivity.

Since its peak in 1968, the minimum wage has lost 31 percent of its purchasing power. That means minimum-wage workers are effectively earning almost a third less than they did four decades ago. In fact, if the minimum wage had kept up with rising prices for food, rent, utilities, clothing, and other goods, then the wage would be $10.56 today. But instead it's $7.25. My bill will restore much of the buying power of the minimum wage.

The minimum wage also used to be a meaningful standard compared with what most people earned and compared with what workers in the economy produced. In 1968, it was just over half of average production wages. But today the minimum wage has fallen to 37 percent of the average production wage.

While Americans are working longer and harder than ever, their paychecks don't reflect their contribution. Workers are much more productive now than in the past. Productivity has risen more than 130 percent since 1968. But average wages have not budged in real terms and the minimum wage has lost ground. So while companies have reaped the benefits of all this productivity growth, the people who actually do the work have seen none of these gains.

As Congress has allowed the minimum wage to languish, working families have fallen below the poverty line. In the 1960s and 1970s, the minimum wage kept a family of three above the poverty line—20 percent above it in 1968. But today, a family of three with one minimum wage earner working full-time, year-round, will bring home a paycheck that is 18 percent below the poverty line.

The Fair Minimum Wage Act will restore the value of the minimum wage, bringing families back above the poverty line, to 106 percent of the poverty line for a family of three. With its provision to index the minimum wage to the cost of living in the future, the minimum wage will no longer lose value. It will rise as the economy grows, which will allow working families to keep up with rising costs.

I think it is very important that we talk about the people who will benefit from the Fair Minimum Wage Act. There are 30 million Americans who will get a fair wage because of this bill, either directly by the legislation or indirectly through the ''trickle up'' effects of a higher wage floor. That's one out of five workers in our country that will be impacted.

They do the hard, important jobs to keep our economy running. They are cashiers and sales help in stores; waiters, waitresses, bussers, runners and hostesses in restaurants. They care for our children, elders, and other loved ones. They help us at the gas station or in the parking garage. They clean offices and homes, and maintain buildings and grounds. They provide administrative support in offices. They work in the fields to bring food to our tables. They all deserve a fair wage.

The families of these 30 million workers will also benefit. Eighteen million children have parents who will get a raise. This will be so meaningful for these families, who are working to build a better life. For a full-time, year-round worker earning right at the minimum wage, it will mean gradually moving from $15,000 a year to $21,000 a year. Think about that. Most of us in this Chamber would not take too much notice of a $6,000 raise. But for minimum wage workers, that's nearly 40 percent more, and that will go a long way to buying groceries and school supplies, paying rent, and saving for college or retirement.

Everyone in our country who works hard and plays by the rules deserves these opportunities: and not just to survive, but to aspire to the middle class.

Raising the minimum wage will benefit our economy as well. With an increase in the minimum wage, workers will have more money to spend. This is just basic economics: increased demand means increased economic activity. They will spend their money in their local economies, giving a boost to Main Street. In fact, economists estimate that the Fair Minimum Wage Act will boost our GDP by $33 billion as it is implemented over the course of three years, generating 140,000 jobs in that time.

We know we can afford this. Wages aren't stuck at rock-bottom levels because our economy isn't growing. Our economy is growing. The problem is that growth is going to profits, to shareholders and executives. Inequality is at the highest level we have seen since the eve of the Great Depression. CEOs are raking in millions, while the people who do the real work in this country are struggling just to get by. In 2011, S&P 500 CEOs earned an average of $13 million. The average CEO earns more before lunchtime on his first day of work than a minimum wage worker earns all year. That is simply appalling.

Now some people, specially the big corporations with these lavish salaries, will criticize my bill, saying it will force businesses to lay off workers or cut back their hours. They say workers will be hurt if the minimum wage goes up. But history proves that these assertions are just plain wrong. We know from decades of rigorous research analyzing the real-life effects of minimum wage increases that minimum wage raises along the lines what I am proposing do not result in job losses or reduced hours. Second, these raises do, in fact, boost workers' earnings. This research applies to teenagers, too. I will say it again: minimum wage increases do not cause teenage unemployment.

So we will not see negative effects from raising the minimum wage. But

we will see positive effects for businesses and our economy. We know that increased wages boosts productivity and morale. Turnover falls significantly, which saves businesses thousands of dollars in recruitment, hiring, and training costs. Moreover, all businesses would have the same minimum wage, meaning businesses that are doing the right thing by paying fair wages will not be undercut by competitors who pay rock-bottom wages.

The American public knows that opponents' outlandish claims about raising the minimum wage don't hold water. That is why raising the minimum wage is incredibly popular among the American public. A national poll last year showed that 73 percent of Americans support raising the minimum wage to $10 an hour and linking it in the future to the cost of living. Even 50 percent of Republicans support raising and indexing the minimum wage. A 2011 poll showed that more than seventy percent of Americans believe that indexing the minimum wage to keep up with inflation will be good for the country.

The Fair Minimum Wage Act has been endorsed by nearly 200 national and local organizations around the country, and the support is only growing. They represent a wide cross-section of the American community. They are working to end poverty, hunger, and homelessness; to increase community involvement; and to ensure fairness for women and people of color. They are organizations of people of faith and organizations of workers. They are retirees and moms and members of the LGBT community. They are social workers, direct care workers, and steelworkers. And they are small businesses. The bill has been endorsed by the US Women's Chamber of Commerce, representing 500,000 small businesses around the country; by the Main Street Alliance, with chapters in a dozen states and 12,000 small business members; by the American Sustainable Business Council, which along with its member organizations represents more than 150,000 businesses nationwide, as well as more than 300,000 entrepreneurs, managers and investors; and by Business for a Fair Minimum Wage and Business for Shared Prosperity.

Because raising the minimum wage is so popular, and so necessary, many States have moved ahead of the Federal Government to do so. Nineteen states and the District of Columbia have raised their minimum wage above the federal level, all across the country. Ten states have already implemented annual indexing of the minimum wage to keep up with the rising cost of living. Thirty States have increased their minimum wage for tipped workers above the Federal level.

I am proud to introduce the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013. It is long past time to give Americans a raise. 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. 460

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 ''Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. MINIMUM WAGE INCREASES.

(a) MINIMUM WAGE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) except as otherwise provided in this section, not less than—

''(A) $8.20 an hour, beginning on the first day of the third month that begins after the date of enactment of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013 Act;

''(B) $9.15 an hour, beginning 1 year after that first day;

''(C) $10.10 an hour, beginning 2 years after that first day; and

''(D) beginning on the date that is 3 years after that first day, and annually thereafter, the amount determined by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (h);''.

(2) DETERMINATION BASED ON INCREASE IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX.—Section 6 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(h)(1) Each year, by not later than the date that is 90 days before a new minimum wage determined under subsection (a)(1)(D) is to take effect, the Secretary shall determine the minimum wage to be in effect pursuant to this subsection for the subsequent 1-year period. The wage determined pursuant to this subsection for a year shall be—

''(A) not less than the amount in effect under subsection (a)(1) on the date of such determination;

''(B) increased from such amount by the annual percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (United States city average, all items, not seasonally adjusted), or its successor publication, as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics; and

''(C) rounded to the nearest multiple of $0.05.

''(2) In calculating the annual percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for purposes of paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall compare such Consumer Price Index for the most recent month, quarter, or year available (as selected by the Secretary prior to the first year for which a minimum wage is in effect pursuant to this subsection) with the Consumer Price Index for the same month in the preceding year, the same quarter in the preceding year, or the preceding year, respectively.''.

(b) BASE MINIMUM WAGE FOR TIPPED EMPLOYEES.—Section 3(m)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(m)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) the cash wage paid such employee, which for purposes of such determination shall be not less than—

''(A) for the 1-year period beginning on the first day of the third month that begins after the date of enactment of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013, $3.00 an hour;

''(B) for each succeeding 1-year period until the hourly wage under this paragraph equals 70 percent of the wage in effect under section 6(a)(1) for such period, an hourly wage equal to the amount determined under this paragraph for the preceding year, increased by the lesser of—

''(i) $0.95; or

''(ii) the amount necessary for the wage in effect under this paragraph to equal 70 percent of the wage in effect under section 6(a)(1) for such period, rounded to the nearest multiple of $0.05; and

''(C) for each succeeding 1-year period after the year in which the hourly wage under this paragraph first equals 70 percent of the wage in effect under section 6(a)(1) for the same period, the amount necessary to ensure that the wage in effect under this paragraph remains equal to 70 percent of the wage in effect under section 6(a)(1), rounded to the nearest multiple of $0.05; and''.

(c) PUBLICATION OF NOTICE.—Section 6 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (as amended by subsection (a)) (29 U.S.C. 206) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(i) Not later than 60 days prior to the effective date of any increase in the minimum wage determined under subsection (h) or required for tipped employees in accordance with subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 3(m)(1), as amended by the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register and on the website of the Department of Labor a notice announcing the adjusted required wage.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall take effect on the first day of the third month that begins after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. COBURN, and Mr. CHAMBLISS):

S. 464. A bill to declare English as the official language of the United States, to establish a uniform English language rule for naturalization, and to avoid misconstructions of the English language texts of the laws of the United States, pursuant to Congress' powers to provide for the general welfare of the United States and to establish a uniform rule of naturalization under article I, section 8, of the Constitution; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, today I would like to introduce a piece of legislation that I believe is of great importance to the unity of the American people—the English Language Unity Act of 2013.

That English Language Unity Act of 2013 recognizes the practical reality of the role of English as our national language and makes English the official language of the United States government, a status in law it has not had before, and calls on government to preserve and enhance the role of English as the official language.

Let me be clear, nothing in the bill prohibits the use of a language other than English. The bill specifically exempts certain actions from requiring English, such as actions necessary for national security, trade, and protecting the public health and safety. The English Language Unity Act is an attempt to legislate a common sense language policy that a nation of immigrants needs one national language. Our Nation was settled by a group of people with a common vision. As our population has grown, our cultural diversity has grown as well. This diversity is part of what makes our nation great.

However, we must be able to communicate with one another so that we can

appreciate our differences. When members of our society cannot speak a common language, misunderstandings arise. Furthermore, the individuals who do not speak the language of the majority miss out on many opportunities to advance in society and achieve the American Dream.

The English Language Unity Act of 2013 requires the establishment of a uniform language requirement for naturalization and requires that all naturalization ceremonies be conducted in English. I want to empower new immigrants coming to our nation by helping them understand and become successful in their new home. I believe that one of the most important ways immigrants can achieve success is by learning English.

There is enormous popular support for English as the official language according to polling that has taken place over the last few years. A large majority of Americans support making English the official language of the United States. There is also widespread and bipartisan support for this legislation, and I hope that you will join me this Congress in supporting the English Language Unity Act of 2013.

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. 464

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 ''English Language Unity Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) The United States is comprised of individuals from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and continues to benefit from this rich diversity.

(2) Throughout the history of the United States, the common thread binding individuals of differing backgrounds has been the English language.

(3) Among the powers reserved to the States respectively is the power to establish the English language as the official language of the respective States, and otherwise to promote the English language within the respective States, subject to the prohibitions enumerated in the Constitution of the United States and in laws of the respective States.

SEC. 3. ENGLISH AS OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title 4, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new chapter:

''CHAPTER 6—OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

''§ 161. Official language of the United States

''The official language of the United States is English.

''§ 162. Preserving and enhancing the role of the official language

''Representatives of the Federal Government shall have an affirmative obligation to preserve and enhance the role of English as the official language of the Federal Government. Such obligation shall include encouraging greater opportunities for individuals to learn the English language.

''§ 163. Official functions of Government to be conducted in English

''(a) OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS.—The official functions of the Government of the United States shall be conducted in English.

''(b) SCOPE.—For the purposes of this section—

''(1) the term 'United States' means the several States and the District of Columbia; and

''(2) the term 'official' refers to any function that—

''(A) binds the Government;

''(B) is required by law; or

''(C) is otherwise subject to scrutiny by either the press or the public.

''(c) PRACTICAL EFFECT.—This section shall apply to all laws, public proceedings, regulations, publications, orders, actions, programs, and policies, but does not apply to—

''(1) teaching of languages;

''(2) requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

''(3) actions, documents, or policies necessary for national security, international relations, trade, tourism, or commerce;

''(4) actions or documents that protect the public health and safety;

''(5) actions or documents that facilitate the activities of the Bureau of the Census in compiling any census of population;

''(6) actions that protect the rights of victims of crimes or criminal defendants; or

''(7) using terms of art or phrases from languages other than English.

''§ 164. Uniform English language rule for naturalization

''(a) UNIFORM LANGUAGE TESTING STANDARD.—All citizens should be able to read and understand generally the English language text of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the laws of the United States made in pursuance of the Constitution.

''(b) CEREMONIES.—All naturalization ceremonies shall be conducted in English.

''§ 165. Rules of construction

''Nothing in this chapter shall be construed—

''(1) to prohibit a Member of Congress or any officer or agent of the Federal Government, while performing official functions, from communicating unofficially through any medium with another person in a language other than English (as long as official functions are performed in English);

''(2) to limit the preservation or use of Native Alaskan or Native American languages (as defined in the Native American Languages Act);

''(3) to disparage any language or to discourage any person from learning or using a language; or

''(4) to be inconsistent with the Constitution of the United States.

''§ 166. Standing

''A person injured by a violation of this chapter may in a civil action (including an action under chapter 151 of title 28) obtain appropriate relief.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters at the beginning of title 4, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 5 the following new item:

''CHAPTER 6. OFFICIAL LANGUAGE''.

SEC. 4. GENERAL RULES OF CONSTRUCTION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTS OF THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 8. General rules of construction for laws of the United States

''(a) English language requirements and workplace policies, whether in the public or private sector, shall be presumptively consistent with the Laws of the United States.

''(b) Any ambiguity in the English language text of the Laws of the United States shall be resolved, in accordance with the last two articles of the Bill of Rights, not to deny or disparage rights retained by the people, and to reserve powers to the States respectively, or to the people.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 1 of title 1, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7 the following new item:

''8. General Rules of Construction for Laws of the United States.''.

SEC. 5. IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS.

The Secretary of Homeland Security shall, within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, issue for public notice and comment a proposed rule for uniform testing English language ability of candidates for naturalization, based upon the principles that—

(1) all citizens should be able to read and understand generally the English language text of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the laws of the United States which are made in pursuance thereof; and

(2) any exceptions to this standard should be limited to extraordinary circumstances, such as asylum.

SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by sections 3 and 4 shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 67—DESIGNATING APRIL 5, 2013, AS ''GOLD STAR WIVES DAY''

Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. SANDERS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 67

Whereas the Senate honors the sacrifices made by the spouses and families of the fallen members of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. represents the spouses and families of the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who have died on active duty or as a result of a service-connected disability;

Whereas the primary mission of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. is to provide services, support, and friendship to the spouses of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas, in 1945, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. was organized with the help of Eleanor Roosevelt to assist the families left behind by the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas the first meeting of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. was held on April 5, 1945;

Whereas April 5, 2013, marks the 68th anniversary of the first meeting of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.;

Whereas the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States bear the burden of protecting the freedom of the people of the United States; and

Whereas the sacrifices of the families of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States should never be forgotten: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 5, 2013, as ''Gold Star Wives Day'';