

BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 742, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Small Business Act to expand the availability of employee stock ownership plans in S corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 743

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 743, a bill to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes.

S. 751

At the request of Mr. COATS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 751, a bill to amend the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 to authorize producers on a farm to produce fruits and vegetables for processing on the base acres of the farm.

S. 758

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 758, a bill to establish a comprehensive literacy program.

S. 759

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 759, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for amounts paid by a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces for a new State license or certification required by reason of a permanent change in the duty station of such member to another State.

S. 767

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 767, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide for Congressional oversight and approval of totalization agreements.

S. RES. 65

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor 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. WYDEN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 783. A bill to amend the Helium Act to improve helium stewardship, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today Senator MURKOWSKI and I are introducing the Helium Stewardship Act of

2013. This legislation is designed to establish a responsible management strategy for the Federal Helium Reserve that will prevent the disruption of the entire helium supply chain that impacts major parts of the U.S. economy.

Helium is a valuable national resource that is used for a wide range of applications such as a coolant for magnetic resonance imaging machines, semiconductor manufacturing, military aviation, aerospace, and Federal R&D; pressurizing and purging systems; leak detection; welding; and breathing mixtures. Helium uses are diverse. Substitutes are often unavailable. The current global supply is constrained.

The Federal Government has long been in the helium business. In the 1920s, helium was used to float blimps or national defense purposes. Since that time the Federal Government has continued to play a significant role in the production, refining, and storing of helium. This has included establishing a U.S. underground stockpile known as the Federal Helium Reserve located just outside of Amarillo, TX. The Reserve currently supplies 40 percent of the domestic and 30 percent of global helium demand. Eventually, the helium supplies in the Reserve will become too depleted to be used, but for now they provide a critical source of supply.

Current law requires the Federal government to sell off the crude helium remaining in the Federal Helium Reserve in order to repay the U.S. Treasury the \$1.3 billion debt incurred creating it. That debt will be fully repaid this fiscal year. As a result, the helium program will terminate in October absent Congressional action. The result, if Congress does not extend operation of the Reserve, will be significant disruption in sector after sector of economy—everything from medical imaging to semiconductor manufacturing.

We need to act. It is important that we act now.

Our bottom line goal is to keep the Federal Helium Reserve open, until new sources of supply can be developed, and prevent significant disruptions to a number of critical U.S. industries.

This bipartisan bill has two primary objective; one is to ensure helium market stability for end-users, and to ensure a fair return on this Federal asset to American taxpayers. We believe that it is essential that there be an adequate price discovery mechanism for the sale price of helium to nongovernmental organizations. Our bill would require the Secretary of Interior to establish an auction process to ensure that government prices for helium reflect its value in the marketplace based on an initial auction of 10 percent of supply and increasing that amount by an additional 10 percent a year. But it is also important to keep in mind that the Reserve currently provides major shares of the domestic and global helium supply and we do not

want this legislation to disrupt the many industrial and health care activities that are dependent on helium.

I believe this legislation strikes the right balance. The bill provides for an orderly, gradual transition among three phases, resulting in minimal market disruption to end users. It introduces a price discovery mechanism and transparency measures that will increase the taxpayer return and stimulate investment in private-sector sources. It further gives priority to meeting the needs of Federal users at Federal agencies, national laboratories, and universities. This legislation maintains access to crude helium for Federal users to perform the experiments that lead to the discoveries that drive economic growth, while requiring the development of a long-term plan for Federal helium purchases.

Helium may not be the most high profile natural resources, but it is one resource that is central to our economy. This legislation is urgent, critical, and necessary to ensure that we continue on a trajectory for economic growth that protects the jobs of domestic manufacturers and industrial partners as well as Federal users across the Nation.

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. 783

*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 “Helium Stewardship Act of 2013”.

#### SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

Section 2 of the Helium Act (50 U.S.C. 167) is amended to read as follows:

#### “SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

“In this Act:

“(1) CLIFFSIDE FIELD.—The term ‘Cliffside Field’ means the helium storage reservoir in which the Federal Helium Reserve is stored.

“(2) FEDERAL HELIUM PIPELINE.—The term ‘Federal Helium Pipeline’ means the federally owned pipeline system through which the Federal Helium Reserve may be transported.

“(3) FEDERAL HELIUM RESERVE.—The term ‘Federal Helium Reserve’ means helium reserves owned by the United States.

“(4) FEDERAL HELIUM SYSTEM.—The term ‘Federal Helium System’ means—

“(A) the Federal Helium Reserve;

“(B) the Cliffside Field;

“(C) the Federal Helium Pipeline; and

“(D) all other infrastructure owned, leased, or managed under contract by the Secretary for the storage, transportation, withdrawal, purification, or management of helium.

“(5) FEDERAL USER.—The term ‘Federal user’ means a Federal agency or extramural holder of 1 or more Federal research grants using helium.

“(6) LOW-BTU GAS.—The term ‘low-Btu gas’ means a fuel gas with a heating value of less than 250 Btu per standard cubic foot measured as the higher heating value resulting from the inclusion of noncombustible gases, including nitrogen, helium, argon, and carbon dioxide.

“(7) PERSON.—The term ‘person’ means any individual, corporation, partnership, firm,

association, trust, estate, public or private institution, or State or political subdivision.

“(8) **PRIORITY PIPELINE ACCESS.**—The term ‘priority pipeline access’ means the first priority of delivery of crude helium under which the Secretary schedules and ensures the delivery of crude helium to a helium refinery through the Federal Helium System.

“(9) **QUALIFIED BIDDER.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘qualified bidder’ means a person the Secretary determines is seeking to purchase helium for their own use, refining, or redelivery to users

“(B) **EXCLUSION.**—The term ‘qualified bidder’ does not include a person who was previously determined to be a qualified bidder if the Secretary determines that the person did not meet the requirements of a qualified bidder under this Act.

“(10) **QUALIFYING DOMESTIC HELIUM TRANSACTION.**—The term ‘qualifying domestic helium transaction’ means any agreement entered into or renegotiated agreement during the preceding 1-year period in the United States for the purchase or sale of at least 20,000,000 standard cubic feet of crude or pure helium to which any holder of a contract with the Secretary for the acceptance, storage, delivery, or redelivery of crude helium from the Federal Helium System is a party.

“(11) **REFINER.**—The term ‘refiner’ means a person with the ability to take delivery of crude helium from the Federal Helium Pipeline and refine the crude helium into pure helium.

“(12) **SECRETARY.**—The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of the Interior.”.

### SEC. 3. AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY.

Section 3 of the Helium Act (50 U.S.C. 167a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) **EXTRACTION OF HELIUM FROM DEPOSITS ON FEDERAL LAND.**—All amounts received by the Secretary from the sale or disposition of helium on Federal land shall be credited to the Helium Production Fund established under section 6(d).”.

### SEC. 4. STORAGE, WITHDRAWAL AND TRANSPORTATION.

Section 5 of the Helium Act (50 U.S.C. 167c) is amended to read as follows:

#### “SEC. 5. STORAGE, WITHDRAWAL AND TRANSPORTATION.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—If the Secretary provides helium storage, withdrawal, or transportation services to any person, the Secretary shall impose a fee on the person that accurately reflects the economic value of those services.

“(b) **MINIMUM FEES.**—The fees charged under subsection (a) shall be not less than the amount required to reimburse the Secretary for the full costs of providing storage, withdrawal, or transportation services.

“(c) **SCHEDULE OF FEES.**—Prior to sale or auction under subsection (a), (b), or (c) of section 6, the Secretary shall annually publish a standardized schedule of fees that the Secretary will charge under this section.

“(d) **TREATMENT.**—All fees received by the Secretary under this section shall be credited to the Helium Production Fund established under section 6(d).

“(e) **NEW STORAGE.**—In accordance with this section, the Secretary shall allow any person or qualified bidder to which crude helium is sold or auctioned under section 6 to store that helium in the Federal Helium Reserve.”.

### SEC. 5. SALE OF CRUDE HELIUM.

Section 6 of the Helium Act (50 U.S.C. 167d) is amended to read as follows:

#### “SEC. 6. SALE OF CRUDE HELIUM.

“(a) **PHASE A: ALLOCATION TRANSITION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall offer crude helium for sale in such quantities, at such times, at not less than the minimum

price established under subsection (b)(7), and under such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out this subsection with minimum market disruption.

“(2) **FEDERAL PURCHASES.**—Federal users may purchase refined helium with priority pipeline access under this subsection from persons who have entered into enforceable contracts to purchase an equivalent quantity of crude helium from the Secretary.

“(3) **DURATION.**—This subsection applies during the period—

“(A) beginning on the date of enactment of the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013; and

“(B) ending on September 30, 2014.

“(b) **PHASE B: AUCTION IMPLEMENTATION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall offer crude helium for sale in quantities not subject to auction under paragraph (2), at such times, at not less than the minimum price established under paragraph (7), and under such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines necessary—

“(A) to maximize total recovery of helium from the Federal Helium Reserve over the long term;

“(B) to maximize the total financial return to the taxpayer;

“(C) to manage crude helium sales according to the ability of the Secretary to extract and produce helium from the Federal Helium Reserve;

“(D) to give priority to meeting the helium demand of Federal users in the event of any disruption to the Federal Helium Reserve; and

“(E) to carry out this subsection with minimum market disruption.

“(2) **AUCTION QUANTITIES.**—For the period described in paragraph (4) and consistent with the conditions described in paragraph (8), the Secretary shall annually auction to any qualified bidder a quantity of crude helium in the Federal Helium Reserve equal to—

“(A) for fiscal year 2015, 10 percent of the total volume of crude helium made available for that fiscal year; and

“(B) for each subsequent fiscal year, a percentage of the total volume of crude helium that is 10 percentage points greater than the percentage available for the previous fiscal year, but not to exceed 100 percent.

“(3) **FEDERAL PURCHASES.**—Federal users may purchase refined helium-with priority pipeline access and at the in-kind price under this subsection from persons who have entered into enforceable contracts to purchase an equivalent quantity of crude helium from the Secretary.

“(4) **DURATION.**—This subsection applies during the period—

“(A) beginning on October 1, 2014; and

“(B) ending on the date on which the volume of recoverable crude helium at the Federal Helium Reserve (other than privately owned quantities of crude helium stored temporarily at the Federal Helium Reserve under section 5 and this section) is 3,000,000,000 standard cubic feet.

“(5) **SAFETY VALVE.**—The Secretary may adjust the quantities specified in paragraph (2)—

“(A) downward, if the Secretary determines the adjustment necessary—

“(i) to minimize market disruptions that pose a threat to the economic well-being of the United States; and

“(ii) only after submitting a written justification of the adjustment to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; or

“(B) upward, if the Secretary determines the adjustment necessary to increase partici-

pation in crude helium auctions or returns to the taxpayer.

“(6) **AUCTION FORMAT.**—The Secretary shall conduct each auction using a method that maximizes revenue to the Federal Government.

“(7) **PRICES.**—The Secretary shall annually establish, as applicable, sale and minimum auction prices under subsection (a)(1) and paragraphs (1) and (2) using, if applicable and in the following order of priority:

“(A) The sale price of crude helium in auctions held by the Secretary under paragraph (2).

“(B) Price recommendations and disaggregated data from a qualified, independent third party who has no conflict of interest, who shall conduct a confidential survey of qualifying domestic helium transactions.

“(C) The volume-weighted average price of all crude helium and pure helium purchased, sold, or processed by persons in all qualifying domestic helium transactions.

“(D) The volume-weighted average cost of converting gaseous crude helium into pure helium.

“(8) **TERMS AND CONDITIONS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall require all persons that are parties to a contract with the Secretary for the withdrawal, acceptance, storage, transportation, delivery, or redelivery of crude helium to disclose, on a strictly confidential basis—

“(i) the volumes and associated prices in dollars per thousand cubic feet of all crude and pure helium purchased, sold, or processed by persons in qualifying domestic helium transactions;

“(ii) the volumes and associated costs in dollars per thousand cubic feet of converting crude helium into pure helium; and

“(iii) refinery capacity and future capacity estimates.

“(B) **CONDITION.**—As a condition of sale or auction to a refiner under subsection (a)(1) and paragraphs (1) and (2), effective beginning 90 days after the date of enactment of the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013, the refiner shall make excess refining capacity of helium available at commercially reasonable rates to—

“(i) any person prevailing in auctions under paragraph (2); and

“(ii) any person that has acquired crude helium from the Secretary from the Federal Helium Reserve by means other than an auction under paragraph (2) after the date of enactment of the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013.

“(9) **USE OF INFORMATION.**—The Secretary may use the information collected under this Act—

“(A) to approximate crude helium prices; and

“(B) to ensure the recovery of fair value for the taxpayers of the United States from sales of crude helium.

“(10) **PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY.**—The Secretary shall adopt such administrative policies and procedures as the Secretary considers necessary and reasonable to ensure the confidentiality of information submitted pursuant to this Act.

“(c) **PHASE C: CONTINUED ACCESS FOR FEDERAL USERS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall offer crude helium for sale to Federal users in such quantities, at such times, at not less than the minimum price established under subsection (b)(7), and under such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out this subsection.

“(2) **FEDERAL PURCHASES.**—Federal users may purchase refined helium with priority pipeline access under this subsection from persons who have entered into enforceable

contracts to purchase an equivalent quantity of crude helium from the Secretary.

“(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This subsection applies beginning on the day after the date described in subsection (b)(4)(B).

“(d) **HELIUM PRODUCTION FUND.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—All amounts received under this Act, including amounts from the sale or auction of crude helium, shall be credited to the Helium Production Fund, which shall be available without fiscal year limitation for purposes considered necessary by the Secretary to carry out this Act (other than sections 16, 17, and 18), including capital investments in upgrades and maintenance at the Federal Helium System, including—

“(A) well head maintenance at the Cliffside Field;

“(B) capital investments in maintenance and upgrades of facilities that pressurize the Cliffside Field;

“(C) capital investments in maintenance and upgrades of equipment related to the storage, withdrawal, transportation, purification, and sale of crude helium from the Federal Helium Reserve;

“(D) entering into purchase, lease, or other agreements to drill new or uncap existing wells to maximize the recovery of crude helium from the Federal Helium System if the Secretary determines the actions to be cost-effective; and

“(E) any other scheduled or unscheduled maintenance of the Federal Helium System.

“(2) **EXCESS FUNDS.**—Any amounts in the Helium Production Fund described in paragraph (1) that exceed the amounts that the Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out paragraph (1) shall be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury.

“(e) **MINIMUM QUANTITY.**—The Secretary shall offer for sale or auction during each fiscal year under subsections (a), (b), and (c) a quantity of crude helium that is the lesser of—

“(1) the quantity of crude helium offered for sale by the Secretary during fiscal year 2012; and

“(2) the maximum total production capacity of the Federal Helium System.

“(f) **MAINTENANCE OF HELIUM SUPPLY.**—The Secretary shall minimize disruption in the supply of helium from the Federal Helium System during the transition between phases of helium sales under subsections (a), (b), and (c).”

## **SEC. 6. INFORMATION, ASSESSMENT, RESEARCH, AND STRATEGY.**

The Helium Act (50 U.S.C. 167 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by repealing section 15 (50 U.S.C. 167m);

(2) by redesignating section 17 (50 U.S.C. 167 note) as section 20; and

(3) by inserting after section 14 (50 U.S.C. 167l) the following:

### **“SEC. 15. INFORMATION.**

“(a) **TRANSPARENCY.**—The Secretary, acting through the Bureau of Land Management, shall make available on the Internet information relating to the Federal Helium System that includes—

“(1) continued publication of an open market and in-kind price;

“(2) aggregated projections of excess refining capacity;

“(3) ownership of helium held in the Federal Helium Reserve;

“(4) the volume of helium delivered to persons through the Federal Helium Pipeline;

“(5) pressure constraints of the Federal Helium Pipeline;

“(6) an estimate of the projected date when 3,000,000,000 standard cubic feet of crude helium will remain in the Federal Helium Reserve and the final phase described in section 6(c) will begin;

“(7) the amount of the fees charged under section 5;

“(8) the scheduling of crude helium deliveries through the Federal Helium Pipeline; and

“(9) other factors that will increase transparency.

“(b) **REPORTING.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013, to provide the market with appropriate and timely information affecting the helium resource, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management shall establish a timely and public reporting process to provide data that affects the helium industry, including—

“(1) annual maintenance schedules and quarterly updates, that shall include—

“(A) the date and duration of planned shutdowns of the Federal Helium Pipeline;

“(B) the nature of work to be undertaken on the Federal Helium System, whether routine, extended, or extraordinary;

“(C) the anticipated impact of the work on the helium supply;

“(D) the efforts being made to minimize any impact on the supply chain; and

“(E) any concerns regarding maintenance of the Federal Helium Pipeline, including the pressure of the pipeline or deviation from normal operation of the pipeline;

“(2) for each unplanned outage, a description of—

“(A) the beginning of the outage;

“(B) the expected duration of the outage;

“(C) the nature of the problem;

“(D) the estimated impact on helium supply;

“(E) a plan to correct problems, including an estimate of the potential timeframe for correction and the likelihood of plan success within the timeframe;

“(F) efforts to minimize negative impacts on the helium supply chain; and

“(G) updates on repair status and the anticipated online date;

“(3) monthly summaries of meetings and communications between the Bureau of Land Management and the Cliffside Refiners Limited Partnership, including a list of participants and an indication of any actions taken as a result of the meetings or communications; and

“(4) current predictions of the lifespan of the Federal Helium System, including how much longer the crude helium supply will be available based on current and forecasted demand and the projected maximum production capacity of the Federal Helium System for the following fiscal year.

### **“SEC. 16. HELIUM GAS RESOURCE ASSESSMENT.**

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013, the Secretary, acting through the Director of the United States Geological Survey, shall—

“(1) in coordination with appropriate heads of State geological surveys—

“(A) complete a national helium gas assessment that identifies and quantifies the quantity of helium, including the isotope helium-3, in each reservoir, including assessments of the constituent gases found in each helium resource, such as carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and natural gas; and

“(B) make available the modern seismic and geophysical log data for characterization of the Bush Dome Reservoir;

“(2) in coordination with appropriate international agencies and the global geology community, complete a global helium gas assessment that identifies and quantifies the quantity of the helium, including the isotope helium-3, in each reservoir;

“(3) in coordination with the Secretary of Energy, acting through the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration, complete—

“(A) an assessment of trends in global demand for helium, including the isotope helium-3;

“(B) a 10-year forecast of domestic demand for helium across all sectors, including scientific and medical research, commercial, manufacturing, space technologies, cryogenics, and national defense; and

“(C) an inventory of medical, scientific, industrial, commercial, and other uses of helium in the United States, including Federal uses, that identifies the nature of the helium use, the amounts required, the technical and commercial viability of helium recapture and recycling in that use, and the availability of material substitutes wherever possible; and

“(4) submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report describing the results of the assessments required under this paragraph.

“(b) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as are necessary.

## **“SEC. 17. LOW-BTU GAS SEPARATION AND HELIUM CONSERVATION.**

“(a) **AUTHORIZATION.**—The Secretary of Energy shall support programs of research, development, commercial application, and conservation (including the programs described in subsection (b))—

“(1) to expand the domestic production of low-Btu gas and helium resources;

“(2) to separate and capture helium from natural gas streams; and

“(3) to reduce the venting of helium and helium-bearing low-Btu gas during natural gas exploration and production.

“(b) **PROGRAMS.**—

“(1) **MEMBRANE TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH.**—The Secretary of Energy, in consultation with other appropriate agencies, shall support a civilian research program to develop advanced membrane technology that is used in the separation of low-Btu gases, including technologies that remove helium and other constituent gases that lower the Btu content of natural gas.

“(2) **HELIUM SEPARATION TECHNOLOGY.**—The Secretary of Energy shall support a research program to develop technologies for separating, gathering, and processing helium in low concentrations that occur naturally in geological reservoirs or formations, including—

“(A) low-Btu gas production streams; and

“(B) technologies that minimize the atmospheric venting of helium gas during natural gas production.

“(3) **INDUSTRIAL HELIUM PROGRAM.**—The Secretary of Energy, working through the Advanced Manufacturing Office of the Department of Energy, shall carry out a research program—

“(A) to develop low-cost technologies and technology systems for recycling, reprocessing, and reusing helium for all medical, scientific, industrial, commercial, aerospace, and other uses of helium in the United States, including Federal uses; and

“(B) to develop industrial gathering technologies to capture helium from other chemical processing, including ammonia processing.

“(c) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as are necessary.

## **“SEC. 18. HELIUM-3 SEPARATION.**

“(a) **INTERAGENCY COOPERATION.**—The Secretary shall cooperate with the Secretary of Energy, or a designee, on any assessment or

research relating to the extraction and refining of the isotope helium-3 from crude helium at the Federal Helium Reserve or along the Federal Helium Pipeline, including—

- “(1) gas analysis;
- “(2) infrastructure studies; and
- “(3) cooperation with refiners.

“(b) **FEASIBILITY STUDY.**—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, or a designee, may carry out a study to assess the feasibility of establishing a facility to separate the isotope helium-3 from crude helium at—

- “(1) the Federal Helium Reserve; or
- “(2) an existing helium separation or purification facility connected to the Federal Helium Pipeline.

“(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that contains a description of the results of the assessments conducted under this section.

“(d) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as are necessary.

#### “SEC. 19. FEDERAL AGENCY HELIUM ACQUISITION STRATEGY.

“Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013, the Secretary (in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of the National Science Foundation, and the Director of the National Institutes of Health) shall submit to Congress a report that provides for Federal uses—

- “(1) an assessment of the consumption of, and projected demand for, crude and refined helium;
- “(2) a description of a 20-year Federal strategy for securing access to crude helium;
- “(3) an assessment of the effects of increases in the price of refined helium and methods and policies for mitigating any determined effects; and
- “(4) a description of a process for prioritization of uses that accounts for diminished availability of helium supplies that may occur over time.”.

#### SEC. 7. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) Section 4 of the Helium Act (50 U.S.C. 167b) is amended by striking “section 6(f)” each place it appears in subsections (c)(3), (c)(4), and (d)(2) and inserting “section 6(d)”.

(b) Section 8 of the Helium Act (50 U.S.C. 167f) is repealed.

#### SEC. 8. EXISTING AGREEMENTS.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not in any manner affect or diminish the rights and obligations of the Secretary of the Interior and private parties under agreements in existence on the date of enactment of this Act, except to the extent that the agreements are renewed or extended after that date.

#### SEC. 9. REGULATIONS.

The Secretary of the Interior shall promulgate such regulations as are necessary to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act, including regulations necessary to prevent unfair acts and practices.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. JOHANNUS):

S. 784. A bill to expand agricultural opportunities for military veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, in 1787, Thomas Jefferson wrote a letter to

George Washington in which he wrote “Agriculture is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals, and happiness.”

Those words remain true for our farmers and ranchers today but they also ring true to for veterans who are returning from service and returning to the land.

Our veteran unemployment rate is shameful, and it really hits home in rural States like Montana where so many folks volunteer for service. I believe we must think outside the box and look for ways to boost jobs for our veterans in everything we do. Which has me turning to the Farm bill.

Today I, with my colleague Senator JOHANNUS, have introduced the Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans Act which will help create new opportunities for our veteran populations hoping to become involved in farming and ranching.

With over 45 percent of those who serve in the military coming from rural communities Congress must ensure our returning servicemembers have a variety of resources at their disposal.

My bill will help boost veteran employment through the Farm bill. It would create a veteran preference in programs that make it cheaper and easier to institute best practices in farming and ranching.

The bill also creates a new Military Liaison Office to assist veterans at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and expands outreach programs to help make sure veterans are aware of the resources available to them.

I urge my colleagues to join myself and Senator JOHANNUS in supporting veterans through our programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

By Mr. REID:

S. 788. A bill to suspend the fiscal year 2013 sequester and establish limits on war-related spending; 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. 788

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

#### SECTION 1. SUSPENSION OF THE 2013 SEQUESTER.

Notwithstanding the sequestration order issued by the President pursuant to section 251A(7)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a(7)(A)), there shall be available for the Federal Government for fiscal year 2013 the amount that would have been made available for the Federal Government for fiscal year 2013 but for sections 251 and 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901 and 901a), sections 3001 and 3004 of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013, and any sequestration order issued by the President.

#### SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO OCO ADJUSTMENTS.

Section 251 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901) is amended—

- (1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) **ELIMINATING A BREACH.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Each nonexempt account within a category shall be reduced by a dollar amount calculated by multiplying the enacted level of sequesterable budgetary resources in that account at that time by the uniform percentage necessary to eliminate a breach within that category.

“(B) **OVERSEAS CONTINGENCIES.**—Any amount of budget authority for overseas contingency operations and related activities for fiscal years 2014 through 2016 in excess of the levels set in subsection 251(b)(2)(E) shall be counted in determining whether a breach has occurred in the security category.”; and

- (2) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by inserting “for fiscal years 2017 through 2021,” before “the Congress”; and

- (B) by inserting at the end the following:

“(E) **OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS/ GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM.**—If, for fiscal years 2014 through 2016, appropriations for discretionary accounts are enacted that Congress designates for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism in statute on an account by account basis, the adjustment for the fiscal year shall be the total of such appropriations for the fiscal year in discretionary accounts designated as being for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism, but not to exceed—

- “(i) for fiscal year 2014, \$92,289,000,000 in additional new budget authority;
- “(ii) for fiscal year 2015, \$37,283,000,000 in additional new budget authority; and
- “(iii) for fiscal year 2016, \$37,283,000,000 in additional new budget authority.”.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 105—DESIGNATING APRIL 2013 AS “FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH”

Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. BROWN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. WARNER, and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 105

Whereas, according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (referred to in this preamble as the “FDIC”), at least 28.3 percent of households in the United States, or nearly 34,000,000 households with approximately 67,888,000 adults, are unbanked or underbanked and therefore have not had the opportunity to access savings, lending, and other basic financial services;

Whereas, according to the FDIC, approximately 30 percent of banks reported in 2011 that consumers lacked understanding of the financial products and services banks offered;

Whereas, according to the 2012 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey Final Report of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling—

- (1) approximately 42 percent of, or nearly 98,000,000, adults in the United States gave themselves a grade of C, D, or F on their