

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 1824. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to exempt certain lead pipes, fittings, fixtures, solder, and flux that contain brass.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, December 13, 2013, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1471. An act to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of the Army to reconsider decisions to inter or honor the memory of a person in a national cemetery, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. SANDERS, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

Special Report entitled "Legislative and Oversight Activities during the 112th Congress by the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs" (Rept. No. 113-125).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. BAUCUS for the Committee on Finance.

*Sarah Bloom Raskin, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

*Rhonda K. Schmittlein, of Missouri, to be a Member of the United States International Trade Commission for a term expiring December 16, 2021.

*John Andrew Koskinen, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the term expiring November 12, 2017.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

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. RUBIO (for himself and Mrs. HAGAN):

S. 1823. A bill to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to better enable State child welfare agencies to prevent human trafficking of children and serve the needs of children who are victims of human trafficking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 1824. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to exempt certain lead pipes, fittings, fixtures, solder, and flux that contain brass; read the first time.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mrs. McCASKILL, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 1825. A bill to improve the management of the Job Corps program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BURR, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. HELLER, Mr. NELSON, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. MORAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 1826. A bill to provide predictability and certainty in the tax law, create jobs, and encourage investment; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. Res. 320. A resolution designating December 14, 2013, as "Wreaths Across America Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. COONS, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COATS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 321. A resolution honoring the life, accomplishments, and legacy of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela and expressing condolences on his passing; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, a bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr.

DURBIN) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 1708, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to the establishment of performance measures for the highway safety improvement program, and for other purposes.

S. 1779

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1779, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to exempt fire hydrants from the prohibition on the use of lead pipes, fittings, fixtures, solder, and flux.

S. RES. 317

At the request of Mr. SESSIONS, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 317, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on the continuing relationship between the United States and Georgia.

S. RES. 319

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 319, a resolution expressing support for the Ukrainian people in light of President Yanukovich's decision not to sign an Association Agreement with the European Union.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mrs. McCASKILL, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 1825. A bill to improve the management of the Job Corps program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today with Senator McCASKILL and Senator MANCHIN to introduce the Securing Job Corps Centers Act, a bill that seeks to address the Job Corps' recent management challenges.

Job Corps is an educational and vocational training program administered by the Department of Labor, DOL, that helps at-risk young people ages 16 through 24 by giving them the tools they need to succeed. Job Corps has been training young adults for meaningful careers for nearly 50 years and is committed to offering its students a safe, drug-free environment where they can train and learn.

Job Corps' mission is to attract eligible young people, teach them the skills they need to become employable and independent, and help them find meaningful jobs or further their education. This mission has been threatened, however, by the Department of Labor's mismanagement.

Earlier this year, the DOL ordered a temporary suspension of new student enrollments as its way to address a significant Job Corps program shortfall of \$61.5 million. This was in addition to the \$39 million shortfall in the previous

program year. The suspension of enrollments decimated the program, setting it back for years to come, which is especially upsetting considering Job Corps has compiled an impressive record over five decades in preparing at-risk youth for the workforce or higher education.

According to DOL, several factors contributed to Job Corps' financial problems, but the most significant was unchecked growth in expenditures due to serious weaknesses in the financial management processes. I wrote to DOL officials for clarification, and they responded with the following:

Job Corps lacked appropriate program monitoring tools and control protocols, including those to sufficiently analyze contractual spending trends. In turn, this led to inadequate spending projections for the Operations account.

It is clear that the Department of Labor has mismanaged this program, and the students suffered the consequences. There are two Job Corps centers in Maine that do excellent work to help these young adults become productive members of society. The Penobscot Job Corps Academy and the Loring Job Corps Center have the capability to serve nearly 800 at-risk youth on a daily basis. These centers put these young men and women on a path to earning their high school diploma and to gaining the necessary skills to enter the workforce or the military or go on to college.

However, the shortfall caused by DOL mismanagement forced these centers to furlough and lay off staff to reduce costs—jeopardizing the long-term sustainability of these centers and their important work.

Studies have found Job Corps to be among the most effective of all federally supported programs that serve youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who are disconnected from both school and work. Even in the face of unprecedented budget shortfalls and enrollment freezes, Job Corps has continued to produce impressive results—85 percent of graduates obtain a job, enroll in higher education, or enlist in the military.

To ensure recent management challenges are addressed as transparently and effectively as possible, our bill would create an advisory board responsible for working with the DOL to develop policy and programmatic recommendations related to Job Corps' administration. The advisory panel will provide a series of reports directly to the U.S. Secretary of Labor and Congress on budget and financial management protocols, cost efficiencies, and maximizing the number of youth served. Our bill will also require earlier notifications of management decisions at DOL that could affect student enrollments.

Job Corps' recent management challenges have had ripple effects throughout the communities served by Job Corps centers and continue to have an impact on center operations. The fact

that every Job Corps center continues to operate at 21 to 25 percent below full capacity is the result of a management structure that forced operational decisions to be made in haste and without proper consideration of alternatives. An advisory board of experienced Job Corps operations experts can help the program and its new leadership to emerge from the crises of the last year and ensure that, in the future, Job Corps policy decisions are always guided by what is in the best interests of Job Corps students and communities.

Job Corps' value remains clear. Studies suggest that leaving behind the youth served by this program could cost our states and our economy hundreds of thousands of dollars per youth. I urge my colleagues to support our bill to ensure that Job Corps returns to the operational efficiency that characterized its first 50 years and remains among the nation's most successful workforce programs.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING,
Washington, DC, February 21, 2013.

HON. SUSAN M. COLLINS,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COLLINS: Thank you for your letter to Acting Secretary of Labor Seth D. Harris regarding the U.S. Department of Labor's (Department) oversight and administration of the Job Corps program. Job Corps is part of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Acting Secretary referred your letter to me for response. Although we are not placing a moratorium on suspension of enrollments at this time, I hope you will find the following information to be helpful.

The Employment and Training Administration administers Job Corps through 147 contracts for the program's 125 centers and educational and vocational programs. Private contractors operate 97 centers and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) runs the remaining 28 centers. This letter discusses the financial problems experienced by Job Corps in Program Year (PY) 2011 and PY 2012, their causes, what we should have done better, corrective actions we have taken, and the steps we will take to ensure that the Job Corps program can continue to provide high-quality programming to some of our nation's most disadvantaged youth. We would welcome the opportunity to provide you and your colleagues with a more in-depth briefing at your earliest convenience. We are continuing to analyze the matters discussed in this letter. The description we have set forth below reflects our current understanding.

Several factors contributed to the financial problems with Job Corps in PY 2011, including growth in expenditures (such as student-related expenditures and those associated with the opening of three new Job Corps centers in PY 2010 and PY 2011) and serious weaknesses in ETA's and Job Corps' financial management processes that led to a failure to identify and adjust for rising costs in a timely manner. In PY 2012, Job Corps again experienced financial problems because the cost-savings measures taken by ETA and Job Corps management were not aggressive enough to allow the program to stay within budget.

For example, Job Corps opened three new centers in PY 2010 and PY 2011 on a delayed schedule. Funding that had been provided to Job Corps to cover the costs of operating these centers in prior years was no longer dedicated to these sites as a result of the delays, and we did not appropriately plan for the increased costs resulting from the opening of these centers.

While these and other costs escalated during the course of PY 2011, the extent of the financial problems went unrecognized. This is largely because Job Corps lacked appropriate program monitoring tools and control protocols, including those to sufficiently analyze contractual spending trends. In turn, this led to inadequate spending projections for the Operations account.

As you know, Congress provided ETA with authority in PY 2011 to transfer up to \$26.2 million in funds from the Job Corps Construction, Rehabilitation and Acquisition (CRA) account to the Operations account. In April 2012, I concluded that Job Corps would need to transfer this full amount. At the end of May 2012, I notified the Secretary of the need to transfer the funds. It also became apparent that this transfer would not be sufficient to meet PY 2011 operating needs.

Thus, ETA obtained approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in June 2012 to transfer up to an additional \$5.37 million from the Training and Employment Services (TES) and State Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service Operations (SUIESO) accounts to the Job Corps Operations account. The Department notified the Appropriations Committees of its intent to transfer these funds. In the end, only \$2.2 million of this initial request was transferred to Job Corps' Operations account.

In addition to the fund transfers for PY 2011, ETA implemented a variety of programmatic changes to control costs. These changes focused on non-mission critical administrative expenses to ensure that student academic, career technical training, and post-graduation placement activities were not affected. These included negotiating across-the-board cost-savings targets with each Job Corps center to deobligate PY 2011 funds and suspending enrollment for new students in the month of June, except for homeless youth. ETA also conducted additional oversight on travel by requiring center operators to report all bus and airfare travel directly to the national office prior to arranging travel with ticketing agencies, thus allowing for real-time accounting of June's travel costs. We also required Job Corps center operators to submit their financial reports every three days during the month of June.

Concurrently, ETA implemented several initiatives to strengthen and coordinate existing controls and created new controls where appropriate to track contractor expenditures, and certify adequate funding throughout the rest of PY 2011. On May 22, 2012, the Department established a Job Corps working group within DOL to provide weekly oversight of the remediation efforts during the end of PY 2011. In addition, in June 2012, Secretary Solis requested that the Inspector General (IG) perform a comprehensive review of the Job Corps financial control system.

We understood at the outset of PY 2012 that we needed to take measures to ensure that program obligations remained within Job Corps' appropriated levels. Even before the program year started, we began to develop a comprehensive plan for cost-cutting measures, which was updated throughout the Program Year. In addition, the improvements made to Job Corps' financial management allowed us to make projections earlier in the program year about the overall budget situation.

Given our strong interest in not reducing student services and minimizing disruption to the Job Corps Program, we proceeded cautiously in evaluating and implementing cost saving measures in PY 2012. In retrospect, it is clear that we did not act as quickly or decisively as circumstances required. As the Assistant Secretary, I take full responsibility for our failure to manage these issues more aggressively.

Although they ultimately were insufficient, we did take several significant steps throughout PY 2012 to gain better control of Job Corps' expenses. For example, in August a newly-created Office of Financial Administration (OFA) within ETA, headed by a Senior Executive Service-level Comptroller, began operating. OFA oversees the now-centralized budget and financial operations of Job Corps. After OFA began operating, we developed initial targets for both savings and what we believed would be a sufficient reserve for the Job Corps program. We also eliminated a contract for accounting services within the Job Corps Operations account, reduced USDA costs, and negotiated with contractors to identify additional cost-savings measures.

In September 2012, the Secretary approved several additional measures for PY 2012: a reduction in new student biweekly stipend and transition pay to graduates, suspension of enrollments in late November and December, centralizing student transportation costs, and reducing the national academic support contract and career technical support contract. In October 2012, we issued guidance informing the Job Corps community that we would be suspending enrollment from November 26 through December 31, 2012. We also announced that, effective November 1, 2012, Job Corps would reduce the stipends and transition pay for new enrollees.

Despite these cost-cutting measures, our analysis of data in November showed that Job Corps would need to implement additional savings because costs were again exceeding budgeted amounts. Therefore, in December, we took additional steps, including eliminating the student stipend for days when a Job Corps student is not present for duty, which took effect immediately, and reducing the student clothing stipend, effective January 1, 2013. We reduced Job Corps' national media buy by \$4 million for PY 2012. In mid-December, we increased the student to teacher ratio from 15:1 to 18:1 in order to save costs, while properly accounting for the special academic needs of at-risk youth.

In January 2013, we also issued guidance to reduce health care-related costs, including by modifying the current health staffing requirements, adjusting the hours for center physicians, dentists and Training Employee Assistance Program specialists based on center usage, and requiring applicants to provide a current record of immunizations in order to eliminate duplicative care. We also continued our work to cut administrative costs. Among other things, we have issued a solicitation that we anticipate will help Job Corps right-size its career technical training and academic programs and we are exploring the best way to centralize utility and other procurements.

Notwithstanding these efforts to reduce costs for PY 2012, as of the beginning of January 2013 we continued to project insufficient cost savings to remain within budgeted levels for the program year. On January 18, 2013, Job Corps instructed all centers to temporarily suspend outreach and admission activities, effective January 28, except for runaway, homeless and foster care candidates. The length of the suspension will be determined by the time it takes to achieve the necessary savings, but we do not expect it to last past June 30, 2013.

The decision to temporarily freeze Job Corps enrollment nationwide was extremely difficult. It came after we implemented many alternative cost-savings measures, albeit insufficient ones. We also considered other alternatives before deciding to implement the temporary enrollment freeze.

Some of the options we considered include an abbreviated program year, slot reductions at a specified number of centers, cutting student stipends and transition pay to current students, and adopting a student leave policy in lieu of scheduled holiday and other school breaks. Ultimately, we rejected these and other options because of their more harmful effect on the Job Corps program and the students that it serves as well as the insufficient savings we would have obtained. Our conclusion was that the most certain and least detrimental savings Job Corps could achieve for the remainder of PY 2012 was from the temporary suspension. This will result in reduced center operating expenses, lower Outreach/Admissions contract costs, as well as savings in student stipend and transportation costs.

Notwithstanding the temporary enrollment suspension, on January 28, 2013, Job Corps continued to serve 44,268 students as of that date. With the suspension of new enrollments, Job Corps will be able to keep its commitment to students who are already in the program.

In closing, the Department deeply regrets the current situation facing the Job Corps program. I personally take responsibility for not acting more quickly to ensure that the program was operating within its appropriated levels. The decision to temporarily suspend enrollment at all centers is the most balanced, efficient way to achieve the savings now in order to avoid a shortfall in PY 2012. However, we clearly recognize that a comprehensive review and assessment of the Job Corps program, contracting, budget, and management is needed to ensure that we do not face this situation again. We will keep your office updated. Please contact Michelle Rose in the Department's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs with any questions. She may be reached at (202) 693-4600.

Sincerely,

JANE OATES,
Assistant Secretary.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 320—DESIGNATING DECEMBER 14, 2013, AS "WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY"

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

S. RES. 320

Whereas 22 years ago, the Wreaths Across America project began an annual tradition, during the month of December, of donating, transporting, and placing Maine balsam fir holiday wreaths on the graves of the fallen heroes buried at Arlington National Cemetery;

Whereas more than 1,000,000 wreaths have been sent to locations, including national cemeteries and veterans memorials, in every State and overseas;

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

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

Whereas in 2012, wreaths were sent to more than 800 locations across the United States and overseas, 100 more locations than the previous year;

Whereas in December 2013, the Patriot Guard Riders, a motorcycle and motor vehicle group that is dedicated to patriotic events and includes more than 250,000 members nationwide, will continue the tradition of the group of escorting a tractor-trailer filled with donated wreaths from Harrington, Maine to Arlington National Cemetery;

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

Whereas December 15, 2012, was previously designated by the Senate as "Wreaths Across America Day"; and

Whereas the Wreaths Across America project will continue the proud legacy on December 14, 2013, bringing approximately 130,000 wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery on that day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates December 14, 2013, as "Wreaths Across America Day";

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

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

SENATE RESOLUTION 321—HONORING THE LIFE, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND LEGACY OF NELSON ROLIHLEHLA MANDELA AND EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON HIS PASSING

Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. McCONNELL, Mr. COONS, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COATS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr.