

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. REID, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2145. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to permit facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs to be designated as voter registration agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. COBURN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 2146. A bill to establish a United States Patent and Trademark Office Innovation Promotion Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. HAGAN (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2147. A bill to amend Public Law 112-59 to provide for the display of the congressional gold medal awarded to the Montford Point Marines, United States Marine Corps, by the Smithsonian Institution and at other appropriate locations; considered and passed.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. HELLER, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2148. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S.J. Res. 34. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to give States the right to repeal Federal laws and regulations when ratified by the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. WALSH):

S. Res. 383. A resolution designating March 2014 as "National Middle Level Education Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WARNER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KING, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. Res. 384. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the humanitarian crisis in Syria and neighboring countries, resulting humanitarian and development challenges, and the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. ENZI):

S. Res. 385. A resolution expressing the Sense of the Senate regarding the use of electronic devices on the floor of the Senate; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota):

S. Res. 386. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Professional Social Work Month and World Social Work Day; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

S. Res. 387. A resolution celebrating the 2014 Arctic Winter Games, in Fairbanks,

Alaska; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 388. A resolution designating March 22, 2014, as "National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Res. 389. A resolution designating the week of March 9, 2014, through March 15, 2014, as "National Youth Synthetic Drug Awareness Week"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 390. A resolution designating March 11, 2014, as "World Plumbing Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 391. A resolution designating Jean M. Manning as Chief Counsel for Employment Emeritus of the United States Senate; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 392. A resolution to authorize document production and representation in *Care One Management LLC, et al. v. United Healthcare Workers East, SEIU 1199, et al.*; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 15

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 15, a bill to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

S. 56

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 56, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the credit for employers establishing workplace child care facilities, to increase the child care credit to encourage greater use of quality child care services, to provide incentives for students to earn child care-related degrees and to work in child care facilities, and to increase the exclusion for employer-provided dependent care assistance.

S. 132

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) were added as cosponsors of S. 132, a bill to provide for the admission of the State of New Columbia into the Union.

S. 375

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 375, a bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.

S. 557

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 557, a bill to amend title XVIII

of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program.

S. 772

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 772, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to clarify the Food and Drug Administration's jurisdiction over certain tobacco products, and to protect jobs and small businesses involved in the sale, manufacturing and distribution of traditional and premium cigars.

S. 842

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 842, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an extension of the Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program.

S. 895

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 895, a bill to improve the ability of the Food and Drug Administration to study the use of antimicrobial drugs in food-producing animals.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2018.

S. 987

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 987, a bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media.

S. 1011

At the request of Mr. JOHANNES, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1011, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 1086

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

S. 1114

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1114, a bill to provide for identification of misaligned currency, require action to correct the misalignment, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1188

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1188, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of the individual mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1256

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1256, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to preserve the effectiveness of medically important antimicrobials used in the treatment of human and animal diseases.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1462

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1462, a bill to extend the positive train control system implementation deadline, and for other purposes.

S. 1507

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado

(Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1622

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1622, a bill to establish the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, and for other purposes.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor 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. 1729

At the request of Mr. KAINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1729, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide further options with respect to levels of coverage under qualified health plans.

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1729, *supra*.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 2013

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2013, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance, and for other purposes.

S. 2037

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 2037, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services.

S. 2058

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr.

KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2058, a bill to establish a loan guarantee program for natural gas distribution grids to be installed in areas with extremely high energy costs.

S. 2059

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2059, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit for the purchase of heating and cooling equipment which meets the Energy Star program requirements and is used in certain high-cost energy communities, and for other purposes.

S. 2066

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2066, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2067, a bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

S. 2068

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2068, a bill to provide for the development and use of technology for personalized handguns, to require that, within 3 years, all handguns manufactured or sold in, or imported into, the United States incorporate such technology, and for other purposes.

S. 2069

At the request of Mr. KAINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2069, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and modify the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers.

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2069, *supra*.

S. 2082

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2082, a bill to provide for the development of criteria under the Medicare program for medically necessary short inpatient hospital stays, and for other purposes.

S. 2086

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 2086, a bill to address current emergency shortages of propane and other home heating fuels and to provide greater flexibility and information for Governors to address such emergencies in the future.

S. 2091

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms.

MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2091, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2105

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCHE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2105, a bill to prohibit the Federal funding of a State firearms ownership database.

S. 2118

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2118, a bill to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 33

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. McCONNELL) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 33, a concurrent resolution celebrating the 100th anniversary of the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act, which established the nationwide Cooperative Extension System.

S. RES. 377

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 377, a resolution recognizing the 193rd anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

AMENDMENT NO. 2807

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2807 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2808

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2808 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2810

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2810 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2822

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2822 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2834

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2834 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2835

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2835 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2839

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2839 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2842

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2842 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2843

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2843 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota:

S. 2125. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United

States in the delivery of such communications; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss a widespread problem affecting rural communities in South Dakota and across our country. This issue represents both a public safety and economic issue for rural America.

For far too long, rural communities have experienced problems with long-distance or wireless telephone calls that are not being properly connected. The call completion problem extends beyond South Dakota and has affected telephone customers in dozens of states. These call failures create frustration and concern for family members trying to connect with friends and family, as well as small businesses losing business because they miss calls from customers. The problem also poses a serious public safety threat, such as when a police dispatcher cannot reach law enforcement or when a doctor cannot call a patient regarding follow-up care. Rural telephone customers affected by this problem are rightfully frustrated and demand a solution.

I first learned about this issue from the manager of a rural health clinic in Canistota, SD. The clinic has experienced a decline in business as a result of the call completion problems. Incoming calls regularly do not reach the clinic and therefore go unanswered. Additionally, some patients have heard misleading messages about the clinic's number being disconnected, which leads them to believe the clinic has closed. This is just one example of the negative impact this problem is having on communities and Main Street businesses across rural America.

To be honest, I could barely believe it when I first learned about this issue. Today, we should be worried about narrowing the digital divide not worrying whether rural communities have access to basic telephone service. While many factors could be at play, the Federal Communications Commission believes the use of third-party "least cost routers" to connect calls is a leading cause of the problem. It appears that some of these intermediate providers are failing to properly complete calls to avoid the higher access charges associated with rural telephone networks. It is particularly challenging to resolve the problem because calls are often dropped before they reach the rural telephone network, making it difficult for rural providers to pinpoint when and where problems occur.

Over the past few years, I have worked with many of my Senate colleagues, the FCC, telephone providers, and consumers to fix this problem and hold those causing this problem accountable. I would like to say a special thank you to Senators AMY KLOBUCHAR and DEB FISCHER for joining me in introducing a Sense of the Senate resolution last May that directed the FCC to take action to end these discriminatory practices. Since our resolution