

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 2511), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

BLM PERMIT PROCESSING IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2014

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Energy Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 2440 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2440) to expand and extend the program to improve permit coordination by the Bureau of Land Management, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a Udall of New Mexico amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3822) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To clarify the uses of the BLM Permit Processing Improvement Fund)

On page 5, line 13, insert “and Indian trust mineral estate” after “Federal”.

On page 6, line 5, insert “and Indian trust mineral estate” after “Federal”.

On page 7, line 11, insert “and Indian trust mineral estate” after “Federal”.

The bill (S. 2440), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2440

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 “BLM Permit Processing Improvement Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. PROGRAM TO IMPROVE FEDERAL PERMIT COORDINATION.

Section 365 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15924) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking “PILOT”;

(2) by striking “Pilot Project” each place it appears and inserting “Project”;

(3) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico” and inserting “the States in which Project offices are located”;

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking “PILOT”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) Any other State, district, or field office of the Bureau of Land Management determined by the Secretary.”;

(5) by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

“(e) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than February 1 of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of the BLM Permit Processing Improvement Act of 2014 and each February 1 thereafter, the Secretary shall report to the Chairman and ranking minority Member of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives, which shall include—

“(1) the allocation of funds to each Project office for the previous fiscal year; and

“(2) the accomplishments of each Project office relating to the coordination and processing of oil and gas use authorizations during that fiscal year.”;

(6) in subsection (h), by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

“(6) the States in which Project offices are located.”;

(7) by striking subsection (i); and

(8) by redesignating subsection (j) as subsection (i).

SEC. 3. BLM OIL AND GAS PERMIT PROCESSING FEE.

Section 35 of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 191) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) BLM OIL AND GAS PERMIT PROCESSING FEE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2026, the Secretary, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, shall collect a fee for each new application for a permit to drill that is submitted to the Secretary.

“(2) AMOUNT.—The amount of the fee shall be \$9,500 for each new application, as indexed for United States dollar inflation from October 1, 2015 (as measured by the Consumer Price Index).

“(3) USE.—Of the fees collected under this subsection for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall transfer—

“(A) for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2019—

“(i) 15 percent to the field offices that collected the fees and used to process protests, leases, and permits under this Act, subject to appropriation; and

“(ii) 85 percent to the BLM Permit Processing Improvement Fund established under subsection (c)(2)(B) (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Fund’); and

“(B) for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2026, all of the fees to the Fund.

“(4) ADDITIONAL COSTS.—During each of fiscal years of 2016 through 2026, the Secretary shall not implement a rulemaking that would enable an increase in fees to recover additional costs related to processing applications for permits to drill.”.

SEC. 4. BLM PERMIT PROCESSING IMPROVEMENT FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 35(c) of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 191(c)) is amended by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) USE OF FUND.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Fund shall be available to the Secretary of the Interior for expenditure, without further appropriation and without fiscal year limitation, for the coordination and processing of oil and gas use authorizations on onshore Federal and Indian trust mineral estate land.

“(B) ACCOUNTS.—The Secretary shall divide the Fund into—

“(i) a Rental Account (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Rental Account’) comprised of rental receipts collected under this section; and

“(ii) a Fee Account (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Fee Account’) comprised of fees collected under subsection (d).

“(4) RENTAL ACCOUNT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use the Rental Account for—

“(i) the coordination and processing of oil and gas use authorizations on onshore Federal and Indian trust mineral estate land under the jurisdiction of the Project offices identified under section 365(d) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15924(d)); and

“(ii) training programs for development of expertise related to coordinating and processing oil and gas use authorizations.

“(B) ALLOCATION.—In determining the allocation of the Rental Account among Project offices for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall consider—

“(i) the number of applications for permit to drill received in a Project office during the previous fiscal year;

“(ii) the backlog of applications described in clause (i) in a Project office;

“(iii) publicly available industry forecasts for development of oil and gas resources under the jurisdiction of a Project office; and

“(iv) any opportunities for partnership with local industry organizations and educational institutions in developing training programs to facilitate the coordination and processing of oil and gas use authorizations.

“(5) FEE ACCOUNT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use the Fee Account for the coordination and processing of oil and gas use authorizations on onshore Federal and Indian trust mineral estate land.

“(B) ALLOCATION.—The Secretary shall transfer not less than 75 percent of the revenues collected by an office for the processing of applications for permits to the State office of the State in which the fees were collected.”.

(b) INTEREST ON OVERPAYMENT ADJUSTMENT.—Section 111(h) of the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act of 1982 (30 U.S.C. 1721(h)) is amended in the first sentence by striking “the rate” and all that follows through the period at the end of the sentence and inserting “a rate equal to the sum of the Federal short-term rate determined under section 6621(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 plus 1 percentage point.”.

SEC. 5. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

RECOGNIZING AUXILIARIES OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Veterans’ Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 506, and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 506) recognizing the patriotism and contributions of auxiliaries of veterans service organizations.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. HEITKAMP. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 506) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of July 17, 2014, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration en bloc of the following resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 547, S. Res. 548, S. Res. 549, and S. Res. 550.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Ms. HEITKAMP. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, and after consultation with the majority leader, pursuant to Public Law 106-286, reappoints the following Member to serve on the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: the Honorable KAY R. HAGAN of North Carolina.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2014

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it recess until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, September 17, 2014; that following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 12 noon, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Ms. HEITKAMP. The next rollcall vote will be at 12 noon on the Bass nomination, as provided for under the previous order.

RECESS UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Ms. HEITKAMP. If there is no further business to come before the Sen-

ate, I ask unanimous consent that it recess under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:04 p.m., recessed until Wednesday, September 17, 2014, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate September 16, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MATTHEW T. HARRINGTON, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

LINDA A. SCHWARTZ, OF CONNECTICUT, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (POLICY AND PLANNING).

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

NINA HACHIGIAN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

GORDON O. TANNER, OF ALABAMA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TODD D. ROBINSON, OF NEW JERSEY, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA.

JANE D. HARTLEY, OF NEW YORK, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

JANE D. HARTLEY, OF NEW YORK, TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO.

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

JEFFERY MARTIN BARAN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2015.

STEPHEN G. BURNS, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR THE TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2019.