

Whereas States that have adopted Common Core State Standards are given preference in the application process for the waivers issued under the authority of section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861) that provide flexibility with respect to certain requirements of such Act;

Whereas States that have adopted Common Core State Standards are currently collaborating to develop common assessments that will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards and replace existing end-of-the-year State assessments;

Whereas these assessments will be available in the 2014–2015 school year;

Whereas 2 consortia of States are developing common assessments: the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC);

Whereas national standards lead to national assessments and national assessments lead to a national curriculum;

Whereas education standards help teachers ensure their students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful by providing clear goals for student learning;

Whereas challenging academic standards are vital to ensuring students are college and career ready;

Whereas blanket education standards should not be a prerequisite for Federal funding;

Whereas States are incentivized to adopt Common Core State Standards by the explicit correlation between the adoption of the Common Core State Standards by the State and the preference provided to such States through the Race to the Top program and the flexibility waivers issued under the authority of section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861);

Whereas the Secretary of Education has created a system of grants and waivers that influence, incentivize, and coerce State educational agencies, commissions, and boards into implementing common elementary and secondary school standards and assessments endorsed by the Secretary;

Whereas when Federal funds are linked to the adoption of common education standards, the end result is increased Federal control over education and a decreased ability of schools to meet the individual needs of the students in their schools;

Whereas the implementation of Common Core State Standards will eventually impact home school and private school students when institutions of higher education are pressured to align their admission and readiness standards with curricula based on the Common Core State Standards;

Whereas the 10th amendment of the Constitution of the United States reads, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people”; and

Whereas, throughout the course of United States history, States have maintained the responsibility of education based on the 10th amendment because the explicit power of educating children was not delegated to the United States by the Constitution: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) States and local educational agencies should maintain the right and responsibility of determining educational curricula, programs of instruction, and assessments for elementary and secondary education;

(2) the Federal Government should not incentivize the adoption of common education standards or the creation of a na-

tional assessment to align with such standards; and

(3) no application process for any Federal grant funds, or for waivers issued by the Secretary under the authority of section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861), that occurs after the date of adoption of this resolution should award any additional points, or provide any preference, for the adoption of the Common Core State Standards or any other national common education standards.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 346—CONGRATULATING THE ATHLETES FROM THE STATE OF WASHINGTON AND ACROSS THE UNITED STATES WHO ARE SET TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2014 WINTER OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES IN SOCHI, RUSSIA

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 346

Whereas the 2014 United States Olympic and Paralympic Team, also known as Team USA, is the largest delegation ever sent to a Winter Olympic Games by the United States;

Whereas the 230 members of Team USA represent the diversity of their Nation and will perform, with skill and grace, to the best of their ability;

Whereas diversity among national Olympic teams fosters greater understanding and peace among nations by upholding the values of the Olympic movement;

Whereas the members of Team USA will represent the spirit of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and fulfill the principles of modern Olympism as outlined in the Olympic Charter as modified by the International Olympic Committee on September 9, 2013;

Whereas on February 11, 2014, women will compete in ski jumping for the first time in Olympic history;

Whereas members of Team USA will compete in all 15 disciplines in the 2014 Winter Olympic Games across 7 sports, and in 94 of 98 medal events;

Whereas Team USA features 106 returning Olympians, including 13 Olympic gold medalists;

Whereas the members of Team USA from the great State of Washington who will proudly represent their Nation are—

(1) Erik Bjornsen of Winthrop, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(2) Sadie Bjornsen of Winthrop, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(3) J.R. Celski of Federal Way, Washington, who will compete in the 500 meter, 1,000 meter, 1,500 meter, and 5,000 meter relay events in short track speedskating;

(4) Patrick Deneen of Cle Elum, Washington, who will compete in the moguls event in freestyle skiing;

(5) Brian Gregg of Winthrop, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(6) Torin Koos of Leavenworth, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(7) Christian Niccum of Woodinville, Washington, who will compete in luge; and

(8) Angeli VanLaanen of Bellingham, Washington, who will compete in the halfpipe event in freestyle skiing; and

Whereas all of the athletes of Team USA should be commended and honored for their

contributions to sport, our country, and the Olympic movement: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges the dedication of the United States Olympic Committee, the national governing bodies of each sport that is an event at the 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the administrators, coaches, families, and all others who support the athletes participating in the Olympic and Paralympic Games; and

(2) congratulates the members of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Teams and wishes them success at the 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 347—PROVIDING FOR COMPLETION OF THE ACCELERATED TRANSITION OF UNITED STATES COMBAT AND MILITARY AND SECURITY OPERATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 347

Whereas, in June 2013, the Government of Afghanistan assumed the lead for combat operations in all regions of Afghanistan consistent with the schedule agreed to by President Barack Obama and President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*,

#### SECTION 1. COMPLETION OF ACCELERATED TRANSITION OF UNITED STATES COMBAT AND MILITARY AND SECURITY OPERATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States—

(1) that, in coordination with the Government of Afghanistan, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member countries, and other allies in Afghanistan, the President shall complete the accelerated transition of United States military and security operations to the Government of Afghanistan and redeploy United States Armed Forces from Afghanistan (including operations involving military and security-related contractors) by not later than December 31, 2014; and

(2) to pursue diplomatic efforts leading to a political settlement and reconciliation of the internal conflict in Afghanistan.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that, should the President determine the necessity to maintain United States troops in Afghanistan to carry out missions after December 31, 2014, any such presence and missions should be authorized by a separate vote of Congress not later than June 1, 2014.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as limiting or prohibiting any authority of the President to—

(1) modify the military strategy, tactics, and operations of United States Armed Forces as such Armed Forces redeploy from Afghanistan;

(2) attack al Qaeda forces wherever such forces are located;

(3) provide financial support and equipment to the Government of Afghanistan for the training and supply of Afghanistan military and security forces;

(4) gather, provide, and share intelligence with United States allies operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan; or

(5) provide security after December 31, 2014, to United States facilities or diplomatic personnel located in Afghanistan.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 348—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE INTERNAL REBUILDING, RESETTLEMENT, AND RECONCILIATION WITHIN SRI LANKA THAT ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE A LASTING PEACE**

Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. CORNYN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 348

Whereas May 19, 2013, marks the four-year anniversary of the end of the 26-year conflict between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Government of Sri Lanka;

Whereas the people of Sri Lanka suffered greatly as a result of this conflict, the impact and aftermath of which has been felt especially by women, children, and families;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka established a “Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission” (LLRC) to report whether any person, group, or institution directly or indirectly bears responsibility for incidents that occurred between February 2002 and May 2009 and to recommend measures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future and promote further national unity and reconciliation among all communities;

Whereas the LLRC report was presented to the Sri Lankan Parliament on December 16, 2011, and officially translated into Sinhala and Tamil on August 16, 2012;

Whereas the LLRC report acknowledges important events and grievances that have contributed to decades of political violence and war in Sri Lanka and makes constructive recommendations on a wide range of issues, including the need to credibly investigate widespread allegations of extrajudicial killings; enforced disappearances; intentional targeting of civilians and noncombatants; demilitarizing the north and the country as a whole; reaching a political settlement with minority communities on the meaningful decentralization of power; and promoting and protecting the right to freedom of expression for all through the enactment of a right to information law and additional rule of law reforms;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka developed the National Plan of Action to implement just 82 of the 285 recommendations of the LLRC in August 2011, and although the Government of Sri Lanka has made some progress on rehabilitation, resettlement of displaced persons, and improvements of infrastructure in the North and East, there are still many issues of major concern;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka has yet to reasonably address issues of reconciliation and accountability through internal processes;

Whereas the Department of State’s 2012 Human Rights Report on Sri Lanka outlines ongoing concerns regarding landownership and property restitution, particularly in the Jaffna Peninsula, where large numbers of persons have not received restitution for land that remains part of government high security zones, and while citizens generally were able to travel almost anywhere in the island, there continues to be police and military checkpoints in the north, and defacto high-security zones and other areas remained off limits to citizens;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka has not taken tangible steps toward demilitarization of civilian functions, particularly in the North and East, and continued military presence on private lands in the North is preventing the resettlement of internally displaced persons who desire a return to peaceful life;

Whereas the Department of State’s 2012 Human Rights Report on Sri Lanka also includes reports of serious human rights violations such as unlawful killings by security forces and government-allied paramilitary groups, often in predominantly Tamil areas; torture and abuse of detainees by police and security forces; and arbitrary arrest and detention by authorities;

Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) resolution supported by the United States and adopted by the UNHRC on March 21, 2013, expresses concern at the continuing reports of violations of human rights in Sri Lanka, including enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, torture, and violations of the rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, as well as intimidation of and reprisals against human rights defenders, members of civil society and journalists, threats to judicial independence and the rule of law, and discrimination on the basis of religion or belief;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka expressed its commitment to addressing the needs of all ethnic groups and has recognized, in the past, the necessity of a political settlement and reconciliation for a peaceful and just society; and

Whereas tangible progress on domestic and international investigations into reports of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other human rights violations during and after the conflict and promoting reconciliation would facilitate enhanced United States engagement and investment in Sri Lanka; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) commends the representatives of the United States on their leadership on United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution (UNHRC) 22/1, adopted by the UNHRC on March 21, 2013, which promotes reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka;

(2) calls on the United States and the international community to establish an independent international accountability mechanism to evaluate reports of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other human rights violations committed by both sides during and after the war in Sri Lanka;

(3) urges the Government of Sri Lanka to allow unimpeded access for media, international aid agencies, and human rights groups into all regions of the country, as well as to detention sites that may hold political and war prisoners;

(4) urges the Government of Sri Lanka to end its media restrictions, including the obstacles to the flow of information in the North and East, and bring to justice those responsible for attacks on journalists and newspaper offices; and

(5) calls upon the President to develop a comprehensive policy towards Sri Lanka that reflects United States interests, including respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, economic interests, and security interests.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 349—CELEBRATING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WALLA WALLA VALLEY AMERICAN VITICULTURAL AREA**

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following reso-

lution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 349

Whereas the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area was designated an American Viticultural Area on February 6, 1984;

Whereas the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area is considered one of the most awarded and recognized of the American Viticultural Areas in the United States;

Whereas in 2013, 4 Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area wines were selected by 3 leading wine publications as among the top 100 wines in the world;

Whereas the wine industry contributes over \$500 million annually to the economy of Walla Walla County;

Whereas jobs in the wine industry are steadily growing in Walla Walla County and are expected to account for 20 percent of jobs in Walla Walla County by 2020;

Whereas the number of wineries in the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area has grown from 4 in 1984 to approximately 130 today;

Whereas agricultural land devoted to growing wine grapes in the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area has grown from 30 acres in 1984 to 1,800 acres in 2013; and

Whereas Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area wines are consistently rated highly by critics and enjoyed by wine connoisseurs around the world: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) commends the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area on the occasion of its 30 year anniversary;

(2) recognizes the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area as a pioneer in the wine industry of Washington; and

(3) requests the Secretary of the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution for appropriate display to the Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 350—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 14, 2014, AS NATIONAL SOLIDARITY DAY FOR COMPASSIONATE PATIENT CARE**

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

S. RES. 350

Whereas National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care promotes national awareness of the importance of compassionate and respectful relationships between health care professionals and their patients as reflected in attitudes that are sensitive to the values, autonomy, and cultural and ethnic backgrounds of patients and their families;

Whereas on February 14 of each year, medical professionals and students stand in solidarity to support compassion in health care as expressed by Dr. Randall Friese, triage physician at the University of Arizona Medical Center, who stated that the most important treatment he provided to Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords after she was shot on January 8, 2011, was to hold her hand and reassure her that she was in the hospital and would be cared for;

Whereas physicians, nurses, and all other health care professionals are charged with practicing medicine as both an art and a science;

Whereas an awareness of the importance of compassion in health care encourages health care professionals to be mindful of the need to treat the patient rather than the disease;

Whereas scientific research reveals that when health care professionals practice