

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) 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. 1738

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1738, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1827, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the American Fighter Aces, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service and defense of our country's freedom throughout the history of aviation warfare.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) 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. 1977

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1977, a bill to repeal section

403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S. 1981

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1981, a bill to provide that the rules of the Federal Communications Commission relating to preserving the open Internet and broadband industry practices shall be restored to effect until the date when the Commission takes final action in the proceedings on such rules that were remanded to the Commission by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

S. 1999

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1999, a bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to require the consent of parties to contracts for the use of arbitration to resolve controversies arising under the contracts and subject to provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes.

S. 2009

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2009, a bill to improve the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs to veterans in rural and highly rural areas, and for other purposes.

S. 2011

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2011, a bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

S.J. RES. 20

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 20, a joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

S. RES. 348

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 348, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

S. RES. 350

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 350, a resolution designating Feb-

ruary 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care.

AMENDMENT NO. 2732

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2732 intended to be proposed to S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2023. A bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, when it comes to understanding the influence of big money donors on congressional and presidential campaigns, the numbers don't lie. In 2012, the top 32 donors to super PACs spent as much money as every single small donation to President Obama and Governor Romney combined. The top 32 donors to super PACs spent as much money as every single small donation to President Obama and Governor Romney combined. That means 32 individuals contributed as much as 3.7 million Americans. In 2012, candidates from both the House and Senate raised the majority of their funds from large donations of \$1,000 or more. Forty percent of all contributions to Senate candidates came from donors who maxed out at the \$2,500 contribution limit, representing just .02 percent of the American population. The amount of money special interest lobbies, wealthy donors, corporations and super PACs are willing to spend to shape policy has grown exponentially since Citizens United and it is expected to increase.

This dramatic increase in spending tells us that special interests are not going to be shy about saying to Members of Congress: If you vote against our interests, we will spend millions to make sure you never get a chance to vote again. That is a terrible reality for many Members of Congress who are trying to make honest decisions about policy. It is an even worse statement about our democracy.

I think it is time for fundamental reform of the way we finance congressional elections. We need a system that allows candidates to focus on their constituents, their districts, and their States, instead of fundraising. We need a system that encourages ordinary Americans—the candidates I call mere mortals—to make their voices heard with small, affordable donations to candidates of their choice.

That is why I am introducing the Fair Elections Now Act. The Fair Elections Now Act will dramatically

change the way campaigns are financed in America. This bill lets candidates focus on the people they represent, regardless of whether these people have wealth or whether they are going to attend big money fundraisers. Fair elections candidates would be in the policy business, regardless of what policies are preferred by the special interests.

I thank Senators BOXER, BROWN, CARDIN, FRANKEN, GILLIBRAND, HARKIN, HEINRICH, KLOBUCHAR, LEAHY, MARKEY, MENENDEZ, MERKLEY, MURPHY, SANDERS, SHAHEEN, and WARREN for joining me in this effort.

The Fair Elections Now Act will help restore public confidence in congressional elections. It provides qualified candidates for Congress with grants, matching funds, and vouchers from the Fair Elections Fund to replace campaign fundraising that now relies largely on lobbyists, wealthy donors, corporations, and other special interests. In return, participating candidates would agree to limit their campaign spending to amounts raised from small-dollar donors plus the amounts provided from the Fair Elections Fund.

There are three stages for Senate candidates under this bill. To participate, candidates would first need to prove their viability by raising a minimum number and amount of small-dollar qualifying contributions from in-State donors. Once a candidate qualifies, that candidate must limit the amount raised from each donor to \$150 per election.

For the primary, participants would receive a base grant that would vary in amount based on the population of the State that the candidate seeks to represent. Participants would also receive a 6-to-1 match for small-dollar donations up to a defined matching cap. The candidate could raise an unlimited amount of \$150 contributions if needed to compete against high-spending opponents.

For the general election, qualified candidates would receive an additional grant, further small-dollar matching, and vouchers for purchasing TV advertising. The candidate could continue to raise an unlimited amount of \$150 contributions if needed. Instead of spending so much time courting donors and super PACs, fair elections candidates would have an incentive to spend their time with the middle-class Americans they want to represent. Candidates would have an incentive to seek small donations, and citizens would have an incentive to donate.

Under the Fair Elections Now Act, the average citizen would know their small donation of \$150 would be converted to a \$900 donation through the 6-to-1 fair elections match. They would also be eligible for a refundable tax credit. The Fair Elections Now Act would establish the "My Voice Tax Credit" to encourage individuals to make small donations to campaigns. The maximum refundable amount for the tax credit would be \$25 for individuals and \$50 for joint filers. To ensure

the tax credit targets small donors, it is only available to individuals who do not contribute more than \$300 to a candidate or political party in any given year.

Our country faces major challenges. Everybody knows we need to reduce the deficit, modernize our energy policy, create good-paying jobs, reform the Tax Code, and many other things. What many people may not know is that at every turn, there are high-powered special interests fighting each and every one of these proposals. It is difficult for Members of Congress not to pay attention to the concerns of these special interests when the Members have to raise money for their own campaigns.

This bill would change the whole ball game. It would reduce the influence of these special interest lobbyists and wealthy donors. As a result, the bill would enhance the voice of average Americans.

Let me be clear. I honestly believe the overwhelming majority of the people serving in political life are good, honest people, and I believe Senators and Congressmen are guided by the best of intentions. But we are stuck in a terrible system. The perception is that politicians are corrupted because of all the big money we each have to raise. Whether it is true or not, that perception and the loss of trust that goes with it makes it incredibly difficult for the Senators to solve tough problems. That is why so many Americans have Congress in such low regard. This problem—the perception of pervasive corruption—is fundamental to our democracy, and we need to address it.

Fair elections is not a farfetched idea. Fair election systems are already at work in cities and States around America. Similar programs exist and are working well in jurisdictions throughout the country from Maine to Arizona. These programs are bringing new faces and new ideas into politics, making more races more competitive, and dramatically reducing the influence of special interests.

The vast majority of Americans agree it is time to fundamentally change the way we finance political campaigns. Recent polling shows that 75 percent of Democrats, 66 percent of Independents, and 55 percent of Republicans support fair elections-style reform. The Fair Elections Now Act is supported by numerous good government groups, former Members of Congress from both parties, prominent business leaders, and even some lobbyists. Everyone is entitled to a seat at the table, but no one is entitled to a special seat, or maybe the only seat. The Fair Elections Now Act will reform our campaign finance system so Members of Congress can focus on implementing policies in the best interests of the people who sent them to Washington.

The Presiding Officer just finished a campaign, and I know, having visited with her in her home State, she worked

hard. I am in the midst of a reelection campaign myself. I know I am working hard. A lot of time is being spent on the telephone, raising money from a lot of generous people.

I say in politics there are millionaires and the mere mortals. I am in the second category, and that means I can't write a check to cover the cost of a campaign. I have to hope enough people want to support me in my effort. With those contributions I will be buying media—primarily television, radio, Internet advertising, some mailings—and paying for a headquarters and volunteers. It is expensive in a big State such as Wisconsin or Illinois.

In the Citizens United era, where the traditional campaigns I just described are frankly not even close to the reality of what candidates face, one incumbent Democratic Senator now up for reelection has had over \$8 million spent against her in her home State with negative advertising that has gone on for months—for months. It is being paid for by some very wealthy billionaires. These billionaires, in this case the Koch Brothers, spent, I believe, \$248 million of their own money in the last election cycle. They are, in fact, a political party to themselves. They decide the candidates they support, which, coincidentally, are all in the other political party, and they invest huge sums of money in those election efforts. Make no mistake. We are raising money on the Democratic side too, but not nearly to the numbers we see on the other side.

This business of politics is being swamped with money in amounts and levels we have never seen before. What it means is that if an incumbent or even a challenger wants to have a viable campaign, they spend more and more time raising money if they can't write a personal check to cover it—and most of us can't. So instead of being back in my State, working on issues that are important in the Senate, I spend a lot of time fundraising. We have become so used to it. It is like the frog in the pot of water on the stove that may not sense the increase in temperature until the water is boiling and it is too late. We are in that same predicament. We are watching, election after election, the cost of campaigns go through the roof. It discourages good people from engaging in the political process. It makes small contributors feel as though they are such small peanuts that nobody even notices.

We have to change that whole concept. I am reluctant to say this, but so far, this campaign finance reform bill is only being cosponsored by Members of one political party. I have tried for years to get Republican support for campaign finance reform. The only Republican Senator who would ever join me was Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, who ultimately changed political parties on me—not on me, but changed political parties and then I didn't have bipartisan sponsorship.

The point I am getting to is this should be a bipartisan issue. I have no

doubt that in a limited campaign with limited expenditures, I would still have enough money to get my message out in Illinois, and I am sure my opponent would, too. That would be a godsend, in sparing me and whomever from raising a lot of money, and a relief to the voters who get sick and tired of the political advertising that swamps the screens in the closing days of a campaign.

Fair elections now is an effort to move in that direction. It is a new concept, but it is one we should look at honestly. We can clean up the election campaigns in America. We can be responsive to the needs of our constituents. We can further the goals of our democracy and do it in a fashion that is affordable and allows mere mortals to compete.

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. 2023

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Fair Elections Now Act”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Subtitle A—Fair Elections Financing Program

Sec. 101. Findings and declarations.

Sec. 102. Eligibility requirements and benefits of Fair Elections financing of Senate election campaigns.

Sec. 103. Prohibition on joint fundraising committees.

Sec. 104. Exception to limitation on coordinated expenditures by political party committees with participating candidates.

TITLE II—IMPROVING VOTER INFORMATION

Sec. 201. Broadcasts relating to all Senate candidates.

Sec. 202. Broadcast rates for participating candidates.

Sec. 203. FCC to prescribe standardized form for reporting candidate campaign ads.

TITLE III—RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Sec. 301. Petition for certiorari.

Sec. 302. Filing by Senate candidates with Commission.

Sec. 303. Electronic filing of FEC reports.

TITLE IV—PARTICIPATION IN FUNDING OF ELECTIONS

Sec. 401. Refundable tax credit for Senate campaign contributions.

TITLE V—REVENUE PROVISIONS

Sec. 501. Fair Elections Fund revenue.

TITLE VI—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Sec. 601. Severability.

Sec. 602. Effective date.

TITLE I—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

SUBTITLE A—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING PROGRAM

SEC. 101. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.

(a) UNDERMINING OF DEMOCRACY BY CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PRIVATE

SOURCES.—The Senate finds and declares that the current system of privately financed campaigns for election to the United States Senate has the capacity, and is often perceived by the public, to undermine democracy in the United States by—

(1) creating a culture that fosters actual or perceived conflicts of interest by encouraging Senators to accept large campaign contributions from private interests that are directly affected by Federal legislation;

(2) diminishing or appearing to diminish Senators' accountability to constituents by compelling legislators to be accountable to the major contributors who finance their election campaigns;

(3) undermining the meaning of the right to vote by allowing monied interests to have a disproportionate and unfair influence within the political process;

(4) imposing large, unwarranted costs on taxpayers through legislative and regulatory distortions caused by unequal access to law-makers for campaign contributors;

(5) making it difficult for some qualified candidates to mount competitive Senate election campaigns;

(6) disadvantaging challengers and discouraging competitive elections; and

(7) burdening incumbents with a preoccupation with fundraising and thus decreasing the time available to carry out their public responsibilities.

(b) ENHANCEMENT OF DEMOCRACY BY PROVIDING ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.—The Senate finds and declares that providing the option of the replacement of large private campaign contributions with allocations from the Fair Elections Fund for all primary, runoff, and general elections to the Senate would enhance American democracy by—

(1) reducing the actual or perceived conflicts of interest created by fully private financing of the election campaigns of public officials and restoring public confidence in the integrity and fairness of the electoral and legislative processes through a program which allows participating candidates to adhere to substantially lower contribution limits for contributors with an assurance that there will be sufficient funds for such candidates to run viable electoral campaigns;

(2) increasing the public's confidence in the accountability of Senators to the constituents who elect them, which derives from the program's qualifying criteria to participate in the voluntary program and the conclusions that constituents may draw regarding candidates who qualify and participate in the program;

(3) helping to reduce the ability to make large campaign contributions as a determinant of a citizen's influence within the political process by facilitating the expression of support by voters at every level of wealth, encouraging political participation, and incentivizing participation on the part of Senators through the matching of small dollar contributions;

(4) potentially saving taxpayers billions of dollars that may be (or that are perceived to be) currently allocated based upon legislative and regulatory agendas skewed by the influence of campaign contributions;

(5) creating genuine opportunities for all Americans to run for the Senate and encouraging more competitive elections;

(6) encouraging participation in the electoral process by citizens of every level of wealth; and

(7) freeing Senators from the incessant preoccupation with raising money, and allowing them more time to carry out their public responsibilities.

SEC. 102. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS OF FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.

The Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 431 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“TITLE V—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

“SUBTITLE A—GENERAL PROVISIONS

“SEC. 501. DEFINITIONS.

“In this title:

“(1) ALLOCATION FROM THE FUND.—The term ‘allocation from the Fund’ means an allocation of money from the Fair Elections Fund to a participating candidate pursuant to section 522.

“(2) BOARD.—The term ‘Board’ means the Fair Elections Oversight Board established under section 531.

“(3) FAIR ELECTIONS QUALIFYING PERIOD.—The term ‘Fair Elections qualifying period’ means, with respect to any candidate for Senator, the period—

“(A) beginning on the date on which the candidate files a statement of intent under section 511(a)(1); and

“(B) ending on the date that is 30 days before—

“(i) the date of the primary election; or

“(ii) in the case of a State that does not hold a primary election, the date prescribed by State law as the last day to qualify for a position on the general election ballot.

“(4) FAIR ELECTIONS START DATE.—The term ‘Fair Elections start date’ means, with respect to any candidate, the date that is 180 days before—

“(A) the date of the primary election; or

“(B) in the case of a State that does not hold a primary election, the date prescribed by State law as the last day to qualify for a position on the general election ballot.

“(5) FUND.—The term ‘Fund’ means the Fair Elections Fund established by section 502.

“(6) IMMEDIATE FAMILY.—The term ‘immediate family’ means, with respect to any candidate—

“(A) the candidate's spouse;

“(B) a child, stepchild, parent, grandparent, brother, half-brother, sister, or half-sister of the candidate or the candidate's spouse; and

“(C) the spouse of any person described in subparagraph (B).

“(7) MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.—The term ‘matching contribution’ means a matching payment provided to a participating candidate for qualified small dollar contributions, as provided under section 523.

“(8) NONPARTICIPATING CANDIDATE.—The term ‘nonparticipating candidate’ means a candidate for Senator who is not a participating candidate.

“(9) PARTICIPATING CANDIDATE.—The term ‘participating candidate’ means a candidate for Senator who is certified under section 515 as being eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund.

“(10) QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION.—The term ‘qualifying contribution’ means, with respect to a candidate, a contribution that—

“(A) is in an amount that is—

“(i) not less than the greater of \$5 or the amount determined by the Commission under section 531; and

“(ii) not more than the greater of \$150 or the amount determined by the Commission under section 531;

“(B) is made by an individual—

“(i) who is a resident of the State in which such Candidate is seeking election; and

“(ii) who is not otherwise prohibited from making a contribution under this Act;

“(C) is made during the Fair Elections qualifying period; and

“(D) meets the requirements of section 512(b).

“(11) QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTION.—The term ‘qualified small dollar contribution’ means, with respect to a candidate, any contribution (or series of contributions)—

“(A) which is not a qualifying contribution (or does not include a qualifying contribution);

“(B) which is made by an individual who is not prohibited from making a contribution under this Act; and

“(C) the aggregate amount of which does not exceed the greater of—

“(i) \$150 per election; or

“(ii) the amount per election determined by the Commission under section 531.

“SEC. 502. FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury a fund to be known as the ‘Fair Elections Fund’.

“(b) AMOUNTS HELD BY FUND.—The Fund shall consist of the following amounts:

“(1) APPROPRIATED AMOUNTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Amounts appropriated to the Fund.

“(B) SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING APPROPRIATIONS.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

“(i) there should be imposed on any payment made to any person (other than a State or local government or a foreign nation) who has contracts with the Government of the United States in excess of \$10,000,000 a tax equal to 0.50 percent of amount paid pursuant to such contracts, except that the aggregate tax for any person for any taxable year shall not exceed \$500,000; and

“(ii) the revenue from such tax should be appropriated to the Fund.

“(2) VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.—Voluntary contributions to the Fund.

“(3) OTHER DEPOSITS.—Amounts deposited into the Fund under—

“(A) section 513(c) (relating to exceptions to contribution requirements);

“(B) section 521(c) (relating to remittance of allocations from the Fund);

“(C) section 533 (relating to violations); and

“(D) any other section of this Act.

“(4) INVESTMENT RETURNS.—Interest on, and the proceeds from, the sale or redemption of, any obligations held by the Fund under subsection (c).

“(c) INVESTMENT.—The Commission shall invest portions of the Fund in obligations of the United States in the same manner as provided under section 9602(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(d) USE OF FUND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The sums in the Fund shall be used to provide benefits to participating candidates as provided in subtitle C.

“(2) INSUFFICIENT AMOUNTS.—Under regulations established by the Commission, rules similar to the rules of section 9006(c) of the Internal Revenue Code shall apply.

“SUBTITLE B—ELIGIBILITY AND CERTIFICATION

“SEC. 511. ELIGIBILITY.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A candidate for Senator is eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund for any election if the candidate meets the following requirements:

“(1) The candidate files with the Commission a statement of intent to seek certification as a participating candidate under this title during the period beginning on the Fair Elections start date and ending on the last day of the Fair Elections qualifying period.

“(2) The candidate meets the qualifying contribution requirements of section 512.

“(3) Not later than the last day of the Fair Elections qualifying period, the candidate files with the Commission an affidavit signed

by the candidate and the treasurer of the candidate’s principal campaign committee declaring that the candidate—

“(A) has complied and, if certified, will comply with the contribution and expenditure requirements of section 513;

“(B) if certified, will comply with the debate requirements of section 514;

“(C) if certified, will not run as a non-participating candidate during such year in any election for the office that such candidate is seeking; and

“(D) has either qualified or will take steps to qualify under State law to be on the ballot.

“(b) GENERAL ELECTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a candidate shall not be eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund for a general election or a general runoff election unless the candidate’s party nominated the candidate to be placed on the ballot for the general election or the candidate otherwise qualified to be on the ballot under State law.

“SEC. 512. QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A candidate for Senator meets the requirement of this section if, during the Fair Elections qualifying period, the candidate obtains—

“(1) a number of qualifying contributions equal to the greater of—

“(A) the sum of—

“(i) 2,000; plus

“(ii) 500 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election; or

“(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531; and

“(2) a total dollar amount of qualifying contributions equal to the greater of—

“(A) 10 percent of the amount of the allocation such candidate would be entitled to receive for the primary election under section 522(c)(1) (determined without regard to paragraph (5) thereof) if such candidate were a participating candidate; or

“(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(b) REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO RECEIPT OF QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION.—Each qualifying contribution—

“(1) may be made by means of a personal check, money order, debit card, credit card, or electronic payment account;

“(2) shall be accompanied by a signed statement containing—

“(A) the contributor’s name and the contributor’s address in the State in which the contributor is registered to vote; and

“(B) an oath declaring that the contributor—

“(i) understands that the purpose of the qualifying contribution is to show support for the candidate so that the candidate may qualify for Fair Elections financing;

“(ii) is making the contribution in his or her own name and from his or her own funds;

“(iii) has made the contribution willingly; and

“(iv) has not received any thing of value in return for the contribution; and

“(3) shall be acknowledged by a receipt that is sent to the contributor with a copy kept by the candidate for the Commission and a copy kept by the candidate for the election authorities in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election.

“(c) VERIFICATION OF QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS.—The Commission shall establish procedures for the auditing and verification of qualifying contributions to ensure that such contributions meet the requirements of this section.

“SEC. 513. CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS.

“(a) GENERAL RULE.—A candidate for Senator meets the requirements of this section if, during the election cycle of the candidate, the candidate—

“(1) except as provided in subsection (b), accepts no contributions other than—

“(A) qualifying contributions;

“(B) qualified small dollar contributions;

“(C) allocations from the Fund under section 522;

“(D) matching contributions under section 523; and

“(E) vouchers provided to the candidate under section 524;

“(2) makes no expenditures from any amounts other than from—

“(A) qualifying contributions;

“(B) qualified small dollar contributions;

“(C) allocations from the Fund under section 522;

“(D) matching contributions under section 523; and

“(E) vouchers provided to the candidate under section 524; and

“(3) makes no expenditures from personal funds or the funds of any immediate family member (other than funds received through qualified small dollar contributions and qualifying contributions).

For purposes of this subsection, a payment made by a political party in coordination with a participating candidate shall not be treated as a contribution to or as an expenditure made by the participating candidate.

“(b) CONTRIBUTIONS FOR LEADERSHIP PACS, ETC.—A political committee of a participating candidate which is not an authorized committee of such candidate may accept contributions other than contributions described in subsection (a)(1) from any person if—

“(1) the aggregate contributions from such person for any calendar year do not exceed \$150; and

“(2) no portion of such contributions is disbursed in connection with the campaign of the participating candidate.

“(c) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a candidate shall not be treated as having failed to meet the requirements of this section if any contributions that are not qualified small dollar contributions, qualifying contributions, or contributions that meet the requirements of subsection (b) and that are accepted before the date the candidate files a statement of intent under section 511(a)(1) are—

“(1) returned to the contributor; or

“(2) submitted to the Commission for deposit in the Fund.

“SEC. 514. DEBATE REQUIREMENT.

“A candidate for Senator meets the requirements of this section if the candidate participates in at least—

“(1) 1 public debate before the primary election with other participating candidates and other willing candidates from the same party and seeking the same nomination as such candidate; and

“(2) 2 public debates before the general election with other participating candidates and other willing candidates seeking the same office as such candidate.

“SEC. 515. CERTIFICATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 days after a candidate for Senator files an affidavit under section 511(a)(3), the Commission shall—

“(1) certify whether or not the candidate is a participating candidate; and

“(2) notify the candidate of the Commission’s determination.

“(b) REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may revoke a certification under subsection (a) if—

“(A) a candidate fails to qualify to appear on the ballot at any time after the date of certification; or

“(B) a candidate otherwise fails to comply with the requirements of this title, including any regulatory requirements prescribed by the Commission.

“(2) REPAYMENT OF BENEFITS.—If certification is revoked under paragraph (1), the candidate shall repay to the Fund an amount equal to the value of benefits received under this title plus interest (at a rate determined by the Commission) on any such amount received.

“SUBTITLE C—BENEFITS

“SEC. 521. BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—For each election with respect to which a candidate is certified as a participating candidate, such candidate shall be entitled to—

“(1) an allocation from the Fund to make or obligate to make expenditures with respect to such election, as provided in section 522;

“(2) matching contributions, as provided in section 523; and

“(3) for the general election, vouchers for broadcasts of political advertisements, as provided in section 524.

“(b) RESTRICTION ON USES OF ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.—Allocations from the Fund received by a participating candidate under sections 522 and matching contributions under section 523 may only be used for campaign-related costs.

“(c) REMITTING ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that is 45 days after an election in which the participating candidate appeared on the ballot, such participating candidate shall remit to the Commission for deposit in the Fund an amount equal to the lesser of—

“(A) the amount of money in the candidate's campaign account; or

“(B) the sum of the allocations from the Fund received by the candidate under section 522 and the matching contributions received by the candidate under section 523.

“(2) EXCEPTION.—In the case of a candidate who qualifies to be on the ballot for a primary runoff election, a general election, or a general runoff election, the amounts described in paragraph (1) may be retained by the candidate and used in such subsequent election.

“SEC. 522. ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall make allocations from the Fund under section 521(a)(1) to a participating candidate—

“(1) in the case of amounts provided under subsection (c)(1), not later than 48 hours after the date on which such candidate is certified as a participating candidate under section 515;

“(2) in the case of a general election, not later than 48 hours after—

“(A) the date of the certification of the results of the primary election or the primary runoff election; or

“(B) in any case in which there is no primary election, the date the candidate qualifies to be placed on the ballot; and

“(3) in the case of a primary runoff election or a general runoff election, not later than 48 hours after the certification of the results of the primary election or the general election, as the case may be.

“(b) METHOD OF PAYMENT.—The Commission shall distribute funds available to participating candidates under this section through the use of an electronic funds exchange or a debit card.

“(c) AMOUNTS.—

“(1) PRIMARY ELECTION ALLOCATION; INITIAL ALLOCATION.—Except as provided in para-

graph (5), the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a primary election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 67 percent of the base amount with respect to such participating candidate.

“(2) PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION ALLOCATION.—The Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a primary runoff election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 25 percent of the amount the participating candidate was eligible to receive under this section for the primary election.

“(3) GENERAL ELECTION ALLOCATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (5), the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a general election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to the base amount with respect to such candidate.

“(4) GENERAL RUNOFF ELECTION ALLOCATION.—The Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a general runoff election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 25 percent of the base amount with respect to such candidate.

“(5) UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a primary or general election that is an uncontested election, the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund to a participating candidate for such election in an amount equal to 25 percent of the allocation which such candidate would be entitled to under this section for such election if this paragraph did not apply.

“(B) UNCONTESTED ELECTION DEFINED.—For purposes of this subparagraph, an election is uncontested if not more than 1 candidate has campaign funds (including payments from the Fund) in an amount equal to or greater than 10 percent of the allocation a participating candidate would be entitled to receive under this section for such election if this paragraph did not apply.

“(d) BASE AMOUNT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the base amount for any candidate is an amount equal to the greater of—

“(A) the sum of—

“(i) \$750,000; plus

“(ii) \$150,000 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election; or

“(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(2) INDEXING.—In each even-numbered year after 2015—

“(A) each dollar amount under paragraph (1)(A) shall be increased by the percent difference between the price index (as defined in section 315(c)(2)(A)) for the 12 months preceding the beginning of such calendar year and the price index for calendar year 2014;

“(B) each dollar amount so increased shall remain in effect for the 2-year period beginning on the first day following the date of the last general election in the year preceding the year in which the amount is increased and ending on the date of the next general election; and

“(C) if any amount after adjustment under subparagraph (A) is not a multiple of \$100, such amount shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$100.

“SEC. 523. MATCHING PAYMENTS FOR QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall pay to each participating candidate an amount equal to 600 percent of the amount of qualified small dollar contributions received by the candidate from individuals who are residents of the State in which such participating candidate is seeking election after the date on which such candidate is certified under section 515.

“(b) LIMITATION.—The aggregate payments under subsection (a) with respect to any candidate shall not exceed the greater of—

“(1) 400 percent of the allocation such candidate is entitled to receive for such election under section 522 (determined without regard to subsection (c)(5) thereof); or

“(2) the percentage of such allocation determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(c) TIME OF PAYMENT.—The Commission shall make payments under this section not later than 2 business days after the receipt of a report made under subsection (d).

“(d) REPORTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each participating candidate shall file reports of receipts of qualified small dollar contributions at such times and in such manner as the Commission may by regulations prescribe.

“(2) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—Each report under this subsection shall disclose—

“(A) the amount of each qualified small dollar contribution received by the candidate;

“(B) the amount of each qualified small dollar contribution received by the candidate from a resident of the State in which the candidate is seeking election; and

“(C) the name, address, and occupation of each individual who made a qualified small dollar contribution to the candidate.

“(3) FREQUENCY OF REPORTS.—Reports under this subsection shall be made no more frequently than—

“(A) once every month until the date that is 90 days before the date of the election;

“(B) once every week after the period described in subparagraph (A) and until the date that is 21 days before the election; and

“(C) once every day after the period described in subparagraph (B).

“(4) LIMITATION ON REGULATIONS.—The Commission may not prescribe any regulations with respect to reporting under this subsection with respect to any election after the date that is 180 days before the date of such election.

“(e) APPEALS.—The Commission shall provide a written explanation with respect to any denial of any payment under this section and shall provide the opportunity for review and reconsideration within 5 business days of such denial.

“SEC. 524. POLITICAL ADVERTISING VOUCHERS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall establish and administer a voucher program for the purchase of airtime on broadcasting stations for political advertisements in accordance with the provisions of this section.

“(b) CANDIDATES.—The Commission shall only disburse vouchers under the program established under subsection (a) to participants certified pursuant to section 515 who have agreed in writing to keep and furnish to the Commission such records, books, and other information as it may require.

“(c) AMOUNTS.—The Commission shall disburse vouchers to each candidate certified under subsection (b) in an aggregate amount equal to the greater of—

“(1) \$100,000 multiplied by the number of congressional districts in the State with respect to which such candidate is running for office; or

“(2) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(d) USE.—

“(1) EXCLUSIVE USE.—Vouchers disbursed by the Commission under this section may be used only for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements relating to a general election for the office of Senate by the participating candidate to which the vouchers were disbursed, except that—

“(A) a candidate may exchange vouchers with a political party under paragraph (2); and

“(B) a political party may use vouchers only to purchase broadcast airtime for political advertisements for generic party advertising (as defined by the Commission in regulations), to support candidates for State or local office in a general election, or to support participating candidates of the party in a general election for Federal office, but only if it discloses the value of the voucher used as an expenditure under section 315(d).

“(2) EXCHANGE WITH POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A participating candidate who receives a voucher under this section may transfer the right to use all or a portion of the value of the voucher to a committee of the political party of which the individual is a candidate (or, in the case of a participating candidate who is not a member of any political party, to a committee of the political party of that candidate's choice) in exchange for money in an amount equal to the cash value of the voucher or portion exchanged.

“(B) CONTINUATION OF CANDIDATE OBLIGATIONS.—The transfer of a voucher, in whole or in part, to a political party committee under this paragraph does not release the candidate from any obligation under the agreement made under subsection (b) or otherwise modify that agreement or its application to that candidate.

“(C) PARTY COMMITTEE OBLIGATIONS.—Any political party committee to which a voucher or portion thereof is transferred under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) shall account fully, in accordance with such requirements as the Commission may establish, for the receipt of the voucher; and

“(ii) may not use the transferred voucher or portion thereof for any purpose other than a purpose described in paragraph (1)(B).

“(D) VOUCHER AS A CONTRIBUTION UNDER FECA.—If a candidate transfers a voucher or any portion thereof to a political party committee under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) the value of the voucher or portion thereof transferred shall be treated as a contribution from the candidate to the committee, and from the committee to the candidate, for purposes of sections 302 and 304;

“(ii) the committee may, in exchange, provide to the candidate only funds subject to the prohibitions, limitations, and reporting requirements of title III of this Act; and

“(iii) the amount, if identified as a ‘voucher exchange’, shall not be considered a contribution for the purposes of sections 315 and 513.

“(e) VALUE; ACCEPTANCE; REDEMPTION.—

“(1) VOUCHER.—Each voucher disbursed by the Commission under this section shall have a value in dollars, redeemable upon presentation to the Commission, together with such documentation and other information as the Commission may require, for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements in accordance with this section.

“(2) ACCEPTANCE.—A broadcasting station shall accept vouchers in payment for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements in accordance with this section.

“(3) REDEMPTION.—The Commission shall redeem vouchers accepted by broadcasting stations under paragraph (2) upon presentation, subject to such documentation, verification, accounting, and application requirements as the Commission may impose to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the voucher redemption system.

“(4) EXPIRATION.—

“(A) CANDIDATES.—A voucher may only be used to pay for broadcast airtime for political advertisements to be broadcast before midnight on the day before the date of the Federal election in connection with which it

was issued and shall be null and void for any other use or purpose.

“(B) EXCEPTION FOR POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES.—A voucher held by a political party committee may be used to pay for broadcast airtime for political advertisements to be broadcast before midnight on December 31st of the odd-numbered year following the year in which the voucher was issued by the Commission.

“(5) VOUCHER AS EXPENDITURE UNDER FECA.—The use of a voucher to purchase broadcast airtime constitutes an expenditure as defined in section 301(9)(A).

“(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) BROADCASTING STATION.—The term ‘broadcasting station’ has the meaning given that term by section 315(f)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934.

“(2) POLITICAL PARTY.—The term ‘political party’ means a major party or a minor party as defined in section 9002(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 9002 (3) or (4)).

“SUBTITLE D—ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

“SEC. 531. FAIR ELECTIONS OVERSIGHT BOARD.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the Federal Election Commission an entity to be known as the ‘Fair Elections Oversight Board’.

“(b) STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall be composed of 5 members appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, of whom—

“(A) 2 shall be appointed after consultation with the majority leader of the Senate;

“(B) 2 shall be appointed after consultation with the minority leader of the Senate; and

“(C) 1 shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the members appointed under subparagraphs (A) and (B).

“(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The members shall be individuals who are nonpartisan and, by reason of their education, experience, and attainments, exceptionally qualified to perform the duties of members of the Board.

“(B) PROHIBITION.—No member of the Board may be—

“(i) an employee of the Federal Government;

“(ii) a registered lobbyist; or

“(iii) an officer or employee of a political party or political campaign.

“(3) DATE.—Members of the Board shall be appointed not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

“(4) TERMS.—A member of the Board shall be appointed for a term of 5 years.

“(5) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Board shall be filled not later than 30 calendar days after the date on which the Board is given notice of the vacancy, in the same manner as the original appointment. The individual appointed to fill the vacancy shall serve only for the unexpired portion of the term for which the individual's predecessor was appointed.

“(6) CHAIRPERSON.—The Board shall designate a Chairperson from among the members of the Board.

“(c) DUTIES AND POWERS.—

“(1) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall have such duties and powers as the Commission may prescribe, including the power to administer the provisions of this title.

“(2) REVIEW OF FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—After each general election for Federal office, the Board shall conduct a comprehensive review of the Fair Elections financing program under this title, including—

“(i) the maximum dollar amount of qualified small dollar contributions under section 501(11);

“(ii) the maximum and minimum dollar amounts for qualifying contributions under section 501(10);

“(iii) the number and value of qualifying contributions a candidate is required to obtain under section 512 to qualify for allocations from the Fund;

“(iv) the amount of allocations from the Fund that candidates may receive under section 522;

“(v) the maximum amount of matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 523;

“(vi) the amount and usage of vouchers under section 524;

“(vii) the overall satisfaction of participating candidates and the American public with the program; and

“(viii) such other matters relating to financing of Senate campaigns as the Board determines are appropriate.

“(B) CRITERIA FOR REVIEW.—In conducting the review under subparagraph (A), the Board shall consider the following:

“(i) QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS.—The Board shall consider whether the number and dollar amount of qualifying contributions required and maximum dollar amount for such qualifying contributions and qualified small dollar contributions strikes a balance regarding the importance of voter involvement, the need to assure adequate incentives for participating, and fiscal responsibility, taking into consideration the number of primary and general election participating candidates, the electoral performance of those candidates, program cost, and any other information the Board determines is appropriate.

“(ii) REVIEW OF PROGRAM BENEFITS.—The Board shall consider whether the totality of the amount of funds allowed to be raised by participating candidates (including through qualifying contributions and small dollar contributions), allocations from the Fund under sections 522, matching contributions under section 523, and vouchers under section 524 are sufficient for voters in each State to learn about the candidates to cast an informed vote, taking into account the historic amount of spending by winning candidates, media costs, primary election dates, and any other information the Board determines is appropriate.

“(C) ADJUSTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Based on the review conducted under subparagraph (A), the Board shall provide for the adjustments of the following amounts:

“(I) the maximum dollar amount of qualified small dollar contributions under section 501(11)(C);

“(II) the maximum and minimum dollar amounts for qualifying contributions under section 501(10)(A);

“(III) the number and value of qualifying contributions a candidate is required to obtain under section 512(a)(1);

“(IV) the base amount for candidates under section 522(d);

“(V) the maximum amount of matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 523(b); and

“(VI) the dollar amount for vouchers under section 524(c).

“(ii) REGULATIONS.—The Commission shall promulgate regulations providing for the adjustments made by the Board under clause (i).

“(D) REPORT.—Not later than March 30 following any general election for Federal office, the Board shall submit a report to Congress on the review conducted under paragraph (1). Such report shall contain a detailed statement of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Board based on such review.

“(d) MEETINGS AND HEARINGS.—

“(1) MEETINGS.—The Board may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Board considers advisable to carry out the purposes of this Act.

“(2) QUORUM.—Three members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for purposes of voting, but a quorum is not required for members to meet and hold hearings.

“(e) REPORTS.—Not later than March 30, 2017, and every 2 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration a report documenting, evaluating, and making recommendations relating to the administrative implementation and enforcement of the provisions of this title.

“(f) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(1) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Each member, other than the Chairperson, shall be paid at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the minimum annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

“(B) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson shall be paid at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the minimum annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level III of the Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5, United States Code.

“(2) PERSONNEL.—

“(A) DIRECTOR.—The Board shall have a staff headed by an Executive Director. The Executive Director shall be paid at a rate equivalent to a rate established for the Senior Executive Service under section 5382 of title 5, United States Code.

“(B) STAFF APPOINTMENT.—With the approval of the Chairperson, the Executive Director may appoint such personnel as the Executive Director and the Board determines to be appropriate.

“(C) ACTUARIAL EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—With the approval of the Chairperson, the Executive Director may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code.

“(D) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Upon the request of the Chairperson, the head of any Federal agency may detail, without reimbursement, any of the personnel of such agency to the Board to assist in carrying out the duties of the Board. Any such detail shall not interrupt or otherwise affect the civil service status or privileges of the Federal employee.

“(E) OTHER RESOURCES.—The Board shall have reasonable access to materials, resources, statistical data, and other information from the Library of Congress and other agencies of the executive and legislative branches of the Federal Government. The Chairperson of the Board shall make requests for such access in writing when necessary.

“(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this subtitle.

“SEC. 532. ADMINISTRATION PROVISIONS.

“The Commission shall prescribe regulations to carry out the purposes of this title, including regulations—

“(1) to establish procedures for—

“(A) verifying the amount of valid qualifying contributions with respect to a candidate;

“(B) effectively and efficiently monitoring and enforcing the limits on the raising of qualified small dollar contributions;

“(C) effectively and efficiently monitoring and enforcing the limits on the use of personal funds by participating candidates;

“(D) monitoring the use of allocations from the Fund and matching contributions

under this title through audits or other mechanisms; and

“(E) the administration of the voucher program under section 524; and

“(2) regarding the conduct of debates in a manner consistent with the best practices of States that provide public financing for elections.

“SEC. 533. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES.

“(a) CIVIL PENALTY FOR VIOLATION OF CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS.—If a candidate who has been certified as a participating candidate under section 515(a) accepts a contribution or makes an expenditure that is prohibited under section 513, the Commission shall assess a civil penalty against the candidate in an amount that is not more than 3 times the amount of the contribution or expenditure. Any amounts collected under this subsection shall be deposited into the Fund.

“(b) REPAYMENT FOR IMPROPER USE OF FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Commission determines that any benefit made available to a participating candidate under this title was not used as provided for in this title or that a participating candidate has violated any of the dates for remission of funds contained in this title, the Commission shall so notify the candidate and the candidate shall pay to the Fund an amount equal to—

“(A) the amount of benefits so used or not remitted, as appropriate; and

“(B) interest on any such amounts (at a rate determined by the Commission).

“(2) OTHER ACTION NOT PRECLUDED.—Any action by the Commission in accordance with this subsection shall not preclude enforcement proceedings by the Commission in accordance with section 309(a), including a referral by the Commission to the Attorney General in the case of an apparent knowing and willful violation of this title.”

SEC. 103. PROHIBITION ON JOINT FUNDRAISING COMMITTEES.

Section 302(e) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 432(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) No authorized committee of a participating candidate (as defined in section 501) may establish a joint fundraising committee with a political committee other than an authorized committee of a candidate.”

SEC. 104. EXCEPTION TO LIMITATION ON COORDINATED EXPENDITURES BY POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES WITH PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

Section 315(d) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 441a(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(A), by striking “in the case of” and inserting “except as provided in paragraph (5), in the case of” and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5)(A) The limitation under paragraph (3)(A) shall not apply with respect to any expenditure from a qualified political party-participating candidate coordinated expenditure fund.

“(B) In this paragraph, the term ‘qualified political party-participating candidate coordinated expenditure fund’ means a fund established by the national committee of a political party, or a State committee of a political party, including any subordinate committee of a State committee, for purposes of making expenditures in connection with the general election campaign of a candidate for election to the office of Senator who is a participating candidate (as defined in section 501), that only accepts qualified coordinated expenditure contributions.

“(C) In this paragraph, the term ‘qualified coordinated expenditure contribution’

means, with respect to the general election campaign of a candidate for election to the office of Senator who is a participating candidate (as defined in section 501), any contribution (or series of contributions)—

“(i) which is made by an individual who is not prohibited from making a contribution under this Act; and

“(ii) the aggregate amount of which does not exceed \$500 per election.”

TITLE II—IMPROVING VOTER INFORMATION

SEC. 201. BROADCASTS RELATING TO ALL SENATE CANDIDATES.

(a) LOWEST UNIT CHARGE; NATIONAL COMMITTEES.—Section 315(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “to such office” in paragraph (1) and inserting “to such office, or by a national committee of a political party on behalf of such candidate in connection with such campaign,”; and

(2) by inserting “for pre-emptible use thereof” after “station” in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1).

(b) PREEMPTION; AUDITS.—Section 315 of such Act (47 U.S.C. 315) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively and moving them to follow the existing subsection (e);

(2) by redesignating the existing subsection (e) as subsection (c); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (c) (as redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(d) PREEMPTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), and notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (b)(1)(A), a licensee shall not preempt the use of a broadcasting station by a legally qualified candidate for Senate who has purchased and paid for such use.

“(2) CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND CONTROL OF LICENSEE.—If a program to be broadcast by a broadcasting station is preempted because of circumstances beyond the control of the station, any candidate or party advertising spot scheduled to be broadcast during that program shall be treated in the same fashion as a comparable commercial advertising spot.

“(e) AUDITS.—During the 30-day period preceding a primary election and the 60-day period preceding a general election, the Commission shall conduct such audits as it deems necessary to ensure that each broadcaster to which this section applies is allocating television broadcast advertising time in accordance with this section and section 312.”

(c) REVOCATION OF LICENSE FOR FAILURE TO PERMIT ACCESS.—Section 312(a)(7) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 312(a)(7)) is amended—

(1) by striking “or repeated”;

(2) by inserting “or cable system” after “broadcasting station”; and

(3) by striking “his candidacy” and inserting “the candidacy of the candidate, under the same terms, conditions, and business practices as apply to the most favored advertiser of the licensee”.

(d) STYLISTIC AMENDMENTS.—Section 315 of such Act (47 U.S.C. 315) is amended—

(1) by striking “the” in subsection (e)(1), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), and inserting “BROADCASTING STATION.”;

(2) by striking “the” in subsection (e)(2), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), and inserting “LICENSEE; STATION LICENSEE.”; and

(3) by inserting “REGULATIONS.” in subsection (f), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), before “The Commission”.

SEC. 202. BROADCAST RATES FOR PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

Section 315(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(b)), as amended by subsection (a), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and (3)”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.—In the case of a participating candidate (as defined under section 501(9) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971), the charges made for the use of any broadcasting station for a television broadcast shall not exceed 80 percent of the lowest charge described in paragraph (1)(A) during—

“(A) the 45 days preceding the date of a primary or primary runoff election in which the candidate is opposed; and

“(B) the 60 days preceding the date of a general or special election in which the candidate is opposed.

“(4) RATE CARDS.—A licensee shall provide to a candidate for Senate a rate card that discloses—

“(A) the rate charged under this subsection; and

“(B) the method that the licensee uses to determine the rate charged under this subsection.”.

SEC. 203. FCC TO PRESCRIBE STANDARDIZED FORM FOR REPORTING CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN ADS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Within 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall initiate a rulemaking proceeding to establish a standardized form to be used by broadcasting stations, as defined in section 315(f)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(f)(1)), to record and report the purchase of advertising time by or on behalf of a candidate for nomination for election, or for election, to Federal elective office.

(b) CONTENTS.—The form prescribed by the Commission under subsection (a) shall require, broadcasting stations to report to the Commission and to the Federal Election Commission, at a minimum—

(1) the station call letters and mailing address;

(2) the name and telephone number of the station's sales manager (or individual with responsibility for advertising sales);

(3) the name of the candidate who purchased the advertising time, or on whose behalf the advertising time was purchased, and the Federal elective office for which he or she is a candidate;

(4) the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person responsible for purchasing broadcast political advertising for the candidate;

(5) notation as to whether the purchase agreement for which the information is being reported is a draft or final version; and

(6) the following information about the advertisement:

(A) The date and time of the broadcast.

(B) The program in which the advertisement was broadcast.

(C) The length of the broadcast airtime.

(c) INTERNET ACCESS.—In its rulemaking under subsection (a), the Commission shall require any broadcasting station required to file a report under this section that maintains an Internet website to make available a link to such reports on that website.

TITLE III—RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION**SEC. 301. PETITION FOR CERTIORARI.**

Section 307(a)(6) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 437d(a)(6)) is amended by inserting “(including a proceeding before the Supreme Court on certiorari)” after “appeal”.

SEC. 302. FILING BY SENATE CANDIDATES WITH COMMISSION.

Section 302(g) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 432(g)) is amended to read as follows:

“(g) FILING WITH THE COMMISSION.—All designations, statements, and reports required to be filed under this Act shall be filed with the Commission.”.

SEC. 303. ELECTRONIC FILING OF FEC REPORTS.

Section 304(a)(11) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 434(a)(11)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “under this Act—” and all that follows and inserting “under this Act shall be required to maintain and file such designation, statement, or report in electronic form accessible by computers.”;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “48 hours” and all that follows through “filed electronically” and inserting “24 hours”; and

(3) by striking subparagraph (D).

TITLE IV—PARTICIPATION IN FUNDING OF ELECTIONS**SEC. 401. REFUNDABLE TAX CREDIT FOR SENATE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to refundable credits) is amended by inserting after section 36B the following new section:

“SEC. 36C. CREDIT FOR SENATE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an individual, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this subtitle an amount equal to 50 percent of the qualified My Voice Federal Senate campaign contributions paid or incurred by the taxpayer during the taxable year.

“(b) LIMITATIONS.—

“(1) DOLLAR LIMITATION.—The amount of qualified My Voice Federal Senate campaign contributions taken into account under subsection (a) for the taxable year shall not exceed \$50 (twice such amount in the case of a joint return).

“(2) LIMITATION ON CONTRIBUTIONS TO FEDERAL SENATE CANDIDATES.—No credit shall be allowed under this section to any taxpayer for any taxable year if such taxpayer made aggregate contributions in excess of \$300 during the taxable year to—

“(A) any single Federal Senate candidate, or

“(B) any political committee established and maintained by a national political party.

“(3) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—No credit shall be allowed under this section to any taxpayer unless the taxpayer provides the Secretary with such information as the Secretary may require to verify the taxpayer's eligibility for the credit and the amount of the credit for the taxpayer.

“(c) QUALIFIED MY VOICE FEDERAL SENATE CONTRIBUTIONS.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘My Voice Federal Senate campaign contribution’ means any contribution of cash by an individual to a Federal Senate candidate or to a political committee established and maintained by a national political party if such contribution is not prohibited under the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971.

“(d) FEDERAL SENATE CANDIDATE.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘Federal Senate candidate’ means any candidate for election to the office of Senator.

“(2) TREATMENT OF AUTHORIZED COMMITTEES.—Any contribution made to an authorized committee of a Federal Senate candidate shall be treated as made to such candidate.

“(e) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a taxable year beginning after 2017, the \$50 amount under subsection (b)(1) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

“(A) such dollar amount, multiplied by

“(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins, determined by substituting ‘calendar year 2016’ for ‘calendar year 1992’ in subparagraph (B) thereof.

“(2) ROUNDING.—If any amount as adjusted under subparagraph (A) is not a multiple of \$5, such amount shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$5.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 6211(b)(4)(A) of such Code is amended by inserting “36C.” after “36B.”.

(2) Section 1324(b)(2) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting “36C,” after “36B.”.

(3) The table of sections for subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 36B the following new item:

“Sec. 36C. Credit for Senate campaign contributions.”.

(c) FORMS.—The Secretary of the Treasury, or his designee, shall ensure that the credit for contributions to Federal Senate candidates allowed under section 36C of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this section, may be claimed on Forms 1040EZ and 1040A.

(d) ADMINISTRATION.—At the request of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Federal Election Commission shall provide the Secretary of the Treasury with such information and other assistance as the Secretary may reasonably require to administer the credit allowed under section 36C of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this section.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2016.

TITLE V—REVENUE PROVISIONS**SEC. 501. FAIR ELECTIONS FUND REVENUE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after chapter 36 the following new chapter:

“CHAPTER 37—TAX ON PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO CERTAIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

“Sec. 4501. Imposition of tax.

“SEC. 4501. IMPOSITION OF TAX.

“(a) TAX IMPOSED.—There is hereby imposed on any payment made to a qualified person pursuant to a contract with the Government of the United States a tax equal to 0.50 percent of the amount paid.

“(b) LIMITATION.—The aggregate amount of tax imposed under subsection (a) for any calendar year shall not exceed \$500,000.

“(c) QUALIFIED PERSON.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘qualified person’ means any person which—

“(1) is not a State or local government, a foreign nation, or an organization described in section 501(c)(3) which is exempt from taxation under section 501(a), and

“(2) has contracts with the Government of the United States with a value in excess of \$10,000,000.

“(d) PAYMENT OF TAX.—The tax imposed by this section shall be paid by the person receiving such payment.

“(e) USE OF REVENUE GENERATED BY TAX.—It is the sense of the Senate that amounts equivalent to the revenue generated by the tax imposed under this chapter should be appropriated for the financing of a Fair Elections Fund and used for the public financing of Senate elections.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapter of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986

is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 36 the following:

“CHAPTER 37—TAX ON PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO CERTAIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply to contracts entered into after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VI—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SEC. 601. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act or amendment made by this Act, or the application of a provision or amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act and amendments made by this Act, and the application of the provisions and amendment to any person or circumstance, shall not be affected by the holding.

SEC. 602. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided for in this Act, this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on January 1, 2017.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 355—CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN TO CEASE THE EXTRA-JUDICIAL RELEASE OF AFGHAN DETAINEES, CARRY OUT ITS COMMITMENTS PURSUANT TO THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING GOVERNING THE TRANSFER OF AFGHAN DETAINEES FROM THE UNITED STATES CUSTODY TO AFGHAN CONTROL AND TO UPHOLD THE AFGHAN RULE OF LAW WITH RESPECT TO THE REFERRAL AND DISPOSITION OF DETAINEES

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. LEVIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 355

Whereas, on March 9, 2012, Afghan General Abdul Rahim Wardak and United States Marine General John Allen signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which the United States reaffirmed its commitment to transfer Afghan nationals detained by the United States Armed Forces at the Detention Facility in Parwan (DFIP) to Afghanistan, provided that the Government of Afghanistan establish an administrative detention regime under its domestic law and comply with its international obligations with respect to due process;

Whereas, on March 25, 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Afghanistan called for the creation of an Afghan Review Board (ARB) to convene under Afghan law to determine the disposition of all Afghan detainees;

Whereas, in the event of a dispute over the disposition of detainees, the March 2013 Memorandum of Understanding also commits the Government of Afghanistan to exchange views and information between the Minister of Defense and the Commander of United States Forces, Afghanistan before any detainee is released;

Whereas the Government of Afghanistan has announced the imminent release of 65 dangerous individuals from the DFIP with-

out referral to the Afghan justice system, despite evidence showing these detainees have engaged in violent crimes against the Afghan people and under protest from United States Forces, Afghanistan;

Whereas detainees from this group of 65 are directly linked to attacks wounding or killing 32 United States or Coalition Forces and attacks wounding or killing 23 Afghan National Security Forces or Afghan civilians;

Whereas the United States Government has declassified and provided hundreds of pages of evidence and investigative leads to the ARB;

Whereas the Justice Center in Parwan has successfully adjudicated more than 3,000 criminal cases of individuals who committed acts of terror against Coalition Forces, Afghan National Security Forces, and the people of Afghanistan;

Whereas there is a legitimate force protection concern for the lives of Coalition Forces and Afghan National Security Forces if any disputed individual is released, since the primary weapon of choice is the improvised explosive device, which also poses a significant threat to Afghan civilians;

Whereas there is evidence that some detainees already released by the ARB have rejoined the fight against Coalition Forces;

Whereas, despite evidence to the contrary, President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai stated the prisoners set to be released are innocent and must be released;

Whereas releasing the dangerous detainees deprives the people of Afghanistan of their day in court and undermines the rule of law in the country;

Whereas the release of detainees under these conditions is not authorized, and the ARB is performing an extra-judicial function, contrary to the rule of law in Afghanistan; and

Whereas this extrajudicial action harms the prospective Bilateral Security Agreement between the United States and Afghanistan for post-2014 United States military presence in the country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) insists President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai honor the terms included in the Memorandum of Understanding, dated March 25, 2013;

(2) insists that if the Afghan Review Board (ARB) will not follow the conditions set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding, that the ARB shall be dismantled and the National Directorate for Security (NDS) and Afghan prosecutors shall determine how to handle the remaining detainees;

(3) urges close and continuing communication between the Minister of Defense and the Commander of United States Forces, Afghanistan prior to the release of any detainee;

(4) urges the Government of Afghanistan to cease the extra-judicial release of detainees and instead refer the dangerous individuals and the remainder of the ARB cases for prosecution at the Justice Center in Parwan or for investigation by the NDS; and

(5) calls on the Secretary of State to consider the Government of Afghanistan's adherence to existing detainee memoranda of understanding in implementing the certification requirements for assistance for Afghanistan under section 7044(3) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2014 (division K of Public Law 113-76).

SENATE RESOLUTION 356—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 13, 2014, AS “\$2.13 DAY”

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. MUR-

RAY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 356

Whereas \$2.13 per hour is the Federal minimum wage that an employer is required to pay a tipped employee (as defined in section 3(t) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(t))) as a cash wage under section 3(m) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 203(m)) (referred to in this preamble as the “Federal minimum wage for tipped employees”);

Whereas when the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee was established in 1966, such wage was linked to the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee under section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1));

Whereas while the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee increased in 2009, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee has not changed in more than 20 years;

Whereas in the 1980s, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee reached 60 percent of the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee, and in 2014, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee is only 29 percent of the \$7.25 per hour Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee;

Whereas tipped employees work in many occupations, including working as restaurant servers, airport attendants, hotel workers, valets, and salon workers;

Whereas \$2.13 per hour is such a low wage that tipped employees are dependent on the discretionary contributions of consumers for the majority of their income;

Whereas 7 States have 1 minimum wage for both tipped employees and covered nonexempt employees, and the restaurant industry has continued to thrive in such States;

Whereas in States with a minimum wage for a tipped employee that is higher than \$2.13 per hour, the poverty rate for tipped employees is lower than the poverty rate for tipped employees in States without such a higher minimum wage for tipped employees;

Whereas restaurant servers have a poverty rate that is 3 times that of the general workforce and are nearly 2 times more likely to depend on the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) than the general workforce;

Whereas States with a minimum wage for a tipped employee of \$2.13 per hour have a poverty rate for employees of color that is nearly double that of States with the highest minimum wage for a tipped employee;

Whereas women account for 66 percent of all tipped employees and 71 percent of restaurant servers;

Whereas 1/3 of tipped employees are parents who work hard to support their families;

Whereas the Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that from 2008 to 2018, the food preparation and serving sector, as defined by the Bureau, would add more than 1,000,000 jobs;

Whereas such food preparation and serving sector has the lowest median wages of the top 20 growth sectors; and

Whereas raising the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee would provide hardworking people in the United States with more just wages, lift families in the United States out of poverty, and provide economic security to tipped employees in the United States: Now, therefore, be it