

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:11 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 622. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction of State and local general sales taxes.

H.R. 1105. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Chairman.

The message further announced that pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 2702, the Clerk of the House reappoints the following member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress: Dr. Sharon Leon of Fairfax, VA.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 984. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare beneficiary access to eye tracking accessories for speech generating devices and to remove the rental cap for durable medical equipment under the Medicare Program with respect to speech generating devices.

H.R. 636. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

H.R. 644. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend and expand the charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory.

H.R. 1295. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve the process for making determinations with respect to whether organizations are exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(4) of such Code.

H.R. 1314. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a right to an administrative appeal relating to adverse determinations of tax-exempt status of certain organizations.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1285. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress on the National Agriculture and Food Defense Strategy (NAFDS)"; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1286. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Judith A.

Fedder, United States Air Force, and her advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1287. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Janet C. Wolfenbarger, United States Air Force, and her advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1288. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), Department of Defense, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1289. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Chief Management Officer, Department of Defense, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1290. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1291. A communication from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Syrian Sanctions Regulations" (31 CFR Part 542) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1292. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1293. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Inc. Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-0365) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1294. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Trawl Catcher Vessels in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XD823) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1295. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer" (RIN0648-XD799) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1296. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New Mexico; Transportation Conformity and Conformity of General Federal Actions" (FRL No. 9925-86-Region 6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1297. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Truckee Meadows project on the Truckee River in Washoe County, Nevada, for the purposes of flood risk management and recreation; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1298. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expatriate Health Plans Under the ACA Section 9010" (Notice 2015-29) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1299. A communication from the Deputy Director, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendments to Excepted Benefits" (RIN0938-AS52) (CMS-9946-F2) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1300. A communication from the Deputy Commissioner for Human Resources, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1301. A communication from the General Counsel and Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Office of Management and Budget, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1302. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the report on activities of the National Guard Counterdrug Schools; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1303. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the Department's activities during calendar year 2014 relative to the Equal Credit Opportunity Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1304. A communication from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting, a report of proposed legislation entitled "Criminal Judicial Procedure, Administration, and Technical Amendments Act of 2015"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1305. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department's activities under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act during fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-11. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Nevada urging the United States Congress to facilitate the payment of contractors who completed hazardous fuels treatment projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin pursuant to contracts with the Nevada Fire Safe Council; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 3

Whereas, In 1999, Northern Nevada experienced one of the worst wildfire years on record, with more than 1.6 million acres burned and significant economic and environmental impacts; and

Whereas, In the spring of 1999, a resolution was approved at Nevada's first comprehensive fire conference, known as the "Living With Fire Forum," which urged the establishment of a statewide council to provide support to make homes, neighborhoods and communities in Nevada safe from fire; and

Whereas, The Nevada Fire Safe Council was formed as a domestic nonprofit corporation on December 10, 1999, and received appropriations from the Nevada Legislature in 2005 and 2007 to administer a community-based wildfire threat reduction program; and

Whereas, By March 2007, the Council had grown to include 60 affiliated chapters and 3,515 members; and

Whereas, The Angora Fire in the summer of 2007 burned more than 250 structures on private property and more than 3,000 acres in the Lake Tahoe Basin, and further amplified the existing need for mitigation work to reduce the threat of wildfire in communities; and

Whereas, Between 2008 and 2012, the Council was awarded over \$21 million in federal reimbursement grants to be used to pay public and private entities for the completion of hazardous fuels treatment projects; and

Whereas, In July 2011, the Office of Inspector General of the United States Department of Agriculture initiated an audit of the Council's records after receiving a complaint on its hotline alleging that the Council was awarding certain contracts in a noncompetitive manner; and

Whereas, The audit report issued by the Inspector General in January 2012 indicated various accounting irregularities in the Council's administration of the federal reimbursement grant money and resulted in the freezing of reimbursement payments of that grant money for completed projects until the accounting deficiencies were corrected; and

Whereas, In November 2012, the Council filed for bankruptcy and ceased operations; and

Whereas, As a result of the freezing of reimbursement payments and the Council's bankruptcy, various public and private entities that had completed hazardous fuels treatment projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin pursuant to agreements with the Council have not been paid for their services, which has caused significant economic hardship to those entities; and

Whereas, On March 20, 2014, California Assemblyman Brian Dahle and his staff were joined by staff from the offices of United States Representatives Doug LaMalfa and Tom McClintock to share their concerns about the outstanding debts of the Council and to explore solutions with Nevada's Legislative Committee for the Review and Oversight of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Marlette Lake Water System: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and Senate of the State of Nevada, Jointly, That the members of

the 78th Session of the Nevada Legislature hereby urge Congress to facilitate the payment of contractors who completed hazardous fuels treatment projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin pursuant to contracts with the Nevada Fire Safe Council and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to the Attorney General of the United States, the Chief of the United States Forest Service, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, the Vice President of the United States as the presiding officer of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and each member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it further

Resolved, That this resolution becomes effective upon passage.

POM-12. A concurrent memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona urging the United States Congress to provide full long-term funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program and to reauthorize Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act funding; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL 1010

Whereas, The State of Arizona is composed of 113,417 square miles of land, of which 17% is managed by the Bureau of Land Management 15% is managed by the United States Forest Service, 2% is managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, 4% is managed by the National Park Service, 4% is military land and 28% is tribal land. Thus, much of the land in Arizona is unavailable for economic development and is not part of the property tax base; and

Whereas, counties are required to provide law enforcement, search and rescue, emergency services, road building and maintenance, and other community services on, or associated with, tax-exempt federally managed public lands; and

Whereas, The Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program was established in 1976 to offset costs incurred by counties for services provided to the federal government and to the users of federally managed lands located within a county; and

Whereas, The national average PILT payment in fiscal year 2014 was \$0.72 per acre, which is far below the amount that federally managed lands would return through both value-based taxation and economic development; and

Whereas, Congress has been unable to pass a long-term funding solution for the PILT program since 2008 and has instead passed last-minute one-year extensions, causing great uncertainty about county finances and services as well as rural school funding; and

Whereas, funding for fiscal year 2015 PILT was included in the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act and the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act, totaling \$442 million, but the fate of fiscal year 2016 and future years is still unknown; and

Whereas, a lack of certainty for PILT funding places the large, unsustainable burden of providing services on federally managed lands squarely on the backs of local county taxpayers, while the presence of that federally managed land creates barriers to economic opportunities; and

Whereas, rural communities and schools in and around national forests have historically relied on a share of receipts from timber harvests to support education services and roads; and

Whereas, in the 1980s, federal restrictions substantially diminished the revenue-generating timber harvests permitted in these forests; and

Whereas, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS) was passed in 2000 to stabilize and transition payments to counties and schools away from the declining and unreliable share of timber sales; and

Whereas, the failure of Congress to honor the more than 100-year-old contract between the federal government and heavily forested communities by not reauthorizing SRS funding for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 will create budgetary shortfalls for rural counties and school districts; and

Whereas, failure to immediately secure SRS funding for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 and PILT funding for fiscal year 2016 and into the future for Arizona counties will critically impact the local budget process and structural solvency of counties and the public school systems and will substantially compromise their ability to provide essential services, such as health, safety and welfare; and

Whereas, the federal government has the duty to reimburse local jurisdictions for the presence of federally managed public lands in a reliable and consistent manner.

Wherefore your memorialist, the Senate of the State of Arizona, the House of Representatives concurring, prays:

1. That the United States Congress provide full long-term funding for the PILT program to help create financial stability within Arizona's counties.

2. That the United States Congress immediately reauthorize SRS funding for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 and work toward a long-term solution.

3. That the United States Congress work with the State of Arizona and county governments to identify and implement policies to promote economic development on, or associated with, federally managed lands.

4. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit a copy of this Memorial to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and each Member of Congress from the State of Arizona.

POM-13. A concurrent memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona urging the United States Congress to enact legislation exempting United States military bases from the regulations and restrictions of the Endangered Species Act; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL 1009

Whereas, the mission of the United States Department of Defense is "to provide the military forces needed to deter war and to protect the security of our country"; and

Whereas, according to the Department of Defense and the Government Accountability Office (GAO), a fundamental principle of military readiness is that the military must train as it intends to fight; and

Whereas, the Department of Defense has established military training facilities in Arizona, including Fort Huachuca, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Luke Air Force Base and the Barry M. Goldwater range, among others, to accomplish this goal; and

Whereas, Department of Defense officials indicate that heightened focus on the application of environmental statutes has affected the use of its training areas; and

Whereas, compliance with environmental regulations, especially the Endangered Species Act (ESA), has caused some training activities to be canceled, postponed or modified; and

Whereas, compliance with environmental regulations, particularly the ESA, has forced military officials to make adjustments to training regimens, including requiring units