

Most recently, Steve has dedicated himself to preserving the memory of the service and sacrifice of wartime veterans for future generations of Vermonters, as well as visitors to the Green Mountain State. In 2010, he spearheaded a major initiative to erect a monument commemorating the thousands of Vermont veterans who served in the Korean war, including the 94 Vermonters who were killed in action during “the forgotten war” and the 20 who remain missing to this day. For more than 3 years, Steve planned, designed, coordinated, and fundraised to make the monument a reality, and on August 5, 2013, he helped inaugurate the Vermont Korean War Monument in Manchester, VT.

Inspired by the overwhelming support for that effort and not one to rest on his laurels, Steve set out to erect a similar monument in honor of World War II veterans, to be installed at the new Bennington Welcome Center on Route 279, also known as the Vermont World War II Veterans Memorial Highway. That project is almost complete and will be dedicated on August 15 as part of the events commemorating the 70th anniversary of the conclusion of World War II. On that date, thanks in large part to Steve’s efforts, Vermonters will gather to unveil a monument recognizing the sacrifices of those who contributed to the defeat of tyranny 70 years ago, including the more than 1,200 Vermonters who died as a result of combat.

Between the two monument campaigns, Steve has logged hundreds of volunteer hours, travelled thousands of miles, raised tens of thousands of dollars, and, most importantly, touched the hearts of countless Vermonters in his quest to honor the service of our State’s veterans.

Steve Leach is another one of those extraordinary veterans we all have in our home States, who, although he took off his uniform, never really quit serving his country. This humble man will be rather embarrassed that I have chosen to place him in the spotlight for his selfless devotion to public service. His tireless efforts deserve special recognition in this body, and I am so proud to share his accomplishments with my colleagues.●

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-22. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan memorializing the United States Congress to require the U.S. Department of Defense to ensure that replacement aircraft are assigned to Selfridge Air National Guard Base to compensate for the proposed elimination of the A-10 fleet; to the Committee on Armed Services.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 29

Whereas, The proposed U.S. Department of Defense budget would eliminate the nation’s

A-10 fleet, including aircraft at Michigan’s Selfridge Air National Guard Base. Selfridge currently is home to 18 A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft, directly supporting 535 jobs related to that mission; and

Whereas, The proposed cuts would have a dramatic effect on the lives and morale of the dedicated men and women who choose to serve our country at Selfridge Air National Guard Base and other U.S. military bases. The elimination of the A-10 fleet would place in jeopardy more than 400 jobs at Selfridge alone; and

Whereas, In Michigan, these proposed cuts would have immeasurable impacts on Macomb County and the local communities surrounding the Selfridge Air National Guard Base. For nearly a century, the base has been a source of community pride and local jobs, with the local economic benefit worth more than \$700 million to residents and businesses in several surrounding cities and townships. In addition, the base is a key component of disaster response for the entire state and a vital base for our nation’s homeland security; and

Whereas, The A-10 fleet should not be eliminated until an enduring fighter aircraft mission, or suitable enduring non-fighter mission supplementary to the KC-135 Air Refueling Tanker, can be assigned to Selfridge Air National Guard Base. The elimination of the A-10 fleet will make Selfridge vulnerable to closure in future Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommendations. Assigning replacement aircraft would not only maintain the viability of this important base for homeland security, but would also be cost-effective: the Air National Guard can operate aircraft at about half the cost of an active duty unit; and

Whereas, The brave pilots and crew who serve in the A-10 unit based at Selfridge Air National Guard Base have performed brilliantly against the enemies of freedom on battlefields across the globe providing desperately needed close air support for our nation’s warriors. It is vital to our national security that those skilled airmen continue to be utilized to defend our nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the Congress of the United States to require the U.S. Department of Defense to ensure that replacement aircraft are assigned to Selfridge Air National Guard Base to compensate for the proposed elimination of the A-10 fleet; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-23. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming requesting the United States Congress to eliminate the freeze on longer combination vehicles and consent to the creation of a voluntary compact between Western States that will establish uniform size and capacity, routes, configuration, and operating conditions for longer combination vehicles; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

HOUSE ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION 2

Whereas, one of the most significant ways to improve freight system performance on the highways of the western United States is through the use of more efficient trucks and truck combinations; and

Whereas, over the past two (2) decades, longer combination vehicles (LCVs), which are tractor-trailer combinations with two (2) or more trailers that have a gross weight ex-

ceeding eighty thousand (80,000) pounds, have demonstrated considerable benefits to the general public through increased productivity, higher safety ratings, increased fuel savings, emissions reductions and congestion mitigation; and

Whereas, a Federal Highway Administration freeze on state authority to expand the of LCVs has been in place since 1991, and since that time there has been substantial population, traffic congestion and vehicle registration growth and a significant increase in vehicle miles traveled and vehicle emissions; and

Whereas, eliminating the freeze on LCVs for the affected states, including Wyoming, will give these states the flexibility to establish uniformity in LCV, oversight and find ways to benefit from LCV operations in each of the affected states and throughout the western United States; and

Whereas, consenting to a voluntary compact or agreement between the states of Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming will allow these states to establish uniform size and weight limits for LCVs, which are not to exceed one hundred twenty-nine thousand (129,000) pounds gross vehicle combination weight or one hundred (100) foot cargo carrying length, and adopt LCV routes, configurations and operating conditions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Members of the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

Section 1. That Congress is urged to lift the freeze on longer commercial vehicles for the affected Western states, including Wyoming, in order to take advantage of new transportation strategies to improve highway efficiency and reduce vehicle miles traveled, traffic congestion, fuel consumption and air pollution emissions.

Section 2. That Congress consent to the creation of voluntary compact or agreement between the states, of Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming that will establish uniform LCV size capacity, routes, configurations and operating conditions.

Section 3. That the Secretary of State of Wyoming transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress and to the Wyoming Congressional Delegation.

POM-24. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming calling on the United States Congress, state, and local authorities to take action to prevent further damage and remediate damages caused by free-roaming feral horses on rangelands in the West and to develop effective fertility control methods to reduce the populations of free-roaming feral horses in the West; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

HOUSE ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION 3

Whereas, Wyoming has recognized the Wild and Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 and free-roaming horses are defined as feral under W.S. 11-48-101(a) (iii); and

Whereas, the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) estimates that almost fifty thousand (50,000) feral horses roam BLM managed rangelands in the West, with nearly three thousand (3,000) of those feral horses, the majority of which descend from animals turned out by ranchers, roaming public rangelands in Wyoming; and

Whereas, free-roaming feral horses have virtually no natural predators in Wyoming

nor the West and BLM evidence suggests the population of feral horses can double in size about every four (4) years if left uncontrolled; and

Whereas, BLM estimates that the current free-roaming population of feral horses significantly exceeds the number that can exist in healthy balance with other public rangeland resources and uses, including wildlife and domestic livestock grazing; and

Whereas, free-roaming feral horses, among other things, trample and destroy vegetation, hard-pack soil, over-graze and decimate riparian areas causing degradation in areas that provide important habitat for native species such as pronghorn, mule deer, big-horn sheep and sage grouse; and

Whereas, the state of Wyoming has a federally approved sage grouse conservation plan, the efficacy of which is being compromised by continuing habitat damage resulting from free-roaming horses; and

Whereas, the number of free-roaming feral horses removed from public rangelands in the West by BLM in compliance with the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971, now far exceeds the number of feral horses adopted or sold; and

Whereas, those feral horses not adopted by the public are held in long-term pastures or short-term corrals, costing BLM nationally an estimated fifty-eight million dollars (\$58,000,000.00) per year; and

Whereas, evidence suggests the development and use of effective fertility control methods can limit the populations of free-roaming feral horses, lessen the need to remove free-roaming feral horses from the state's rangelands, improve the health of the rangelands in the West, conserve wildlife habitat and save taxpayers money; and

Whereas, the following reports provide, among other things, data, statistics and recommended strategies to manage free-roaming feral horses in the West and protect the state's rangeland resources and uses: Range-wide Interagency Sage-grouse Conservation Team, Near-Term Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Action Plan (September 2012); Ted Williams, Horse Sense, Audubon (September/October 2006); David Ganskopp and Martin Vavra, Habitat Use by Feral Horses in the Northern Sagebrush Steppe, Journal of Range Management Volume 39(3) (May 1986); K.W. Davies and C.S. Boyd, Effects on Feral Free-Roaming Horses on Semi-Arid Rangeland Ecosystems: An Example from the Sagebrush Steppe, Ecosphere Volume 5(10) (October 2014); Linda Zeigenfuss et al., Influence of Nonnative and Native Ungulate Biomass and Seasonal Precipitation on Vegetation Production in a Great Basin Ecosystem, Western North American Naturalist Volume 74(3) (2014); Erik Beaver and Peter Brussard, Examining Ecological Consequences of Feral Horse Grazing Using Exclosures, Western North American Naturalist Volume 60(3) (2000); Kelly Crane et al., Habitat Selection Patterns of Feral Horses in Southcentral Wyoming, Journal of Range Management Volume 50(4) (July 1997); Erik Beaver, Management Implications of the Ecology of Free-Roaming Horses in Semi-Arid Ecosystems of the Western United States, Wildlife Society Bulletin Volume 31(3) (2003); and Erik Beaver and Cameron Aldridge, Influences of Free-Roaming Equids on Sagebrush Ecosystems, with a Focus on Greater Sage-Grouse, Studies in Avian Biology Volume 38 (2011): Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Members of the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

Section 1. That the Wyoming Legislature calls on Congress and federal agencies to adequately fund and support all efforts to manage free-roaming feral horses on rangelands in the West at the appropriate management level, utilizing all management and

control methods authorized by Section 3(d) of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act.

Section 2. That the Wyoming Legislature calls on Congress in conjunction with all appropriate state and local governments to engage in cooperative efforts to remediate and minimize the environmental impact of free-roaming feral horses on rangelands in the West. These efforts should include the development and use of effective fertility control methods to reduce the free-roaming populations of feral horses on rangelands in the West.

Section 3. That the Wyoming Legislature calls on Congress to prohibit the reintroduction of feral horses back onto the western rangelands outside the current herd management areas, nor onto existing herdo management areas at or above the authorized management levels.

Section 4. That the Wyoming Legislature calls on Congress and federal agencies to prioritize these requested management activities to the sage grouse core areas and priority habitat strongholds in order to reduce the possibility of an endangered listing for the sage grouse and to stop the resource-damage now occurring.

Section 5. That the Secretary of State of Wyoming transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, to the Wyoming Congressional Delegation, the Secretary of the Interior, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Land Management and the Director of the Wyoming Office of the Bureau of Land Management.

POM-25. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts memorializing the President of the United States and the United States Congress to establish a Presidential Youth Council; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

RESOLUTIONS

Whereas, Young people have always played an important role in the nation's history and development but continue to play a disproportionately small role in American government; and

Whereas, Just over 1/3 of the United States population is comprised of Americans age 24 and under; and

Whereas, Youth participation, involvement and engagement should be universally recognized as safeguards of democracy but the existing mechanisms of the Federal Government are designed in ways that inhibit youth participation, leading to the underrepresentation of young people in the policymaking process; and

Whereas, Policy decisions made today will have a profound impact on future generations and all Americans should have a voice in government, especially with regard to policies that directly affect them; and

Whereas, A Presidential Youth Council would offer young persons in America with a means of sharing their perspectives and voicing their opinions at the highest level of government while also providing the President and Congress with a bipartisan source of information on the concerns facing youths across the country; and

Whereas, Members of Congress, governors, state legislatures and mayors have created youth councils that have proven to be effective means of receiving input from young people and have led to more efficient policies and practices affecting young people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Massachusetts General Court hereby encourages the creation of a

Presidential Youth Council to advise the President and Congress on the perspectives of young people, to assist in the design and implementation of youth policies and to allow young people to provide solutions on the most pressing issues facing the future of America; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted forthwith by the Clerk of the Senate to the President of the United States, to the Presiding Officer of each branch of Congress and to the Members thereof from the commonwealth.

POM-26. A resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of California urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to work together to create a comprehensive and workable approach to reform the nation's immigration system according to specified principles; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2

Whereas, This country was built by immigrants seeking a better life; and

Whereas, Estimates suggest that there are 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the shadows in the United States, including millions of children brought to this country undocumented who have grown up here, call the United States home, and are suffering from our dysfunctional immigration policy; and

Whereas, A logical and streamlined path to citizenship for individuals after they gain legal status would stimulate the economy by allowing these individuals to get college degrees and driver's licenses, buy homes, start new companies, and create legal, tax-paying jobs, affording them a chance at the American Dream; and

Whereas, The United States Congress last enacted major immigration legislation more than 25 years ago; and

Whereas, Since that time, fragmented attempts at immigration reform have failed to create the rational and effective systems needed to maintain international competitiveness. Whether in industries like agriculture, which requires large numbers of workers able to perform physically demanding tasks, or in industries like technology or health care, where the demand for employees with advanced degrees is projected to exceed supply within the next five years, immigration policy must be designed to respond to emerging labor needs in all sectors of the United States economy; and

Whereas, Our national interests and security are not served by our outdated, inefficient, and slow-moving immigration system. Patchwork attempts to mend its deficiencies undermine our potential for prosperity and leave us vulnerable and unable to meet the needs of the modern world; and

Whereas, Labor mobility is crucial to our economic prosperity and our country's recovery from the economic crisis. Yet our rigid, outdated immigration policies are making it difficult for our companies and our nation to compete. Information released in a study by the University of California, Los Angeles, states that legalizing the status of undocumented immigrants working and living in the United States would create approximately \$1.5 trillion in additional gross domestic product growth over the next 10 years and increase wages for all workers. Another study by the University of California, Davis, indicates that the last large wave of immigrants, from 1990 to 2007, inclusive, raised the income of a native-born American worker by an average of \$5,000; and

Whereas, California has the largest share of immigrants in the country. These immigrants are a vital and productive part of our state's economy and are active in a variety

of industries, including technology, biotech, hospitality, agriculture, construction, services, transportation, and textiles. They also represent a large share of our new small business owners and create economic property and needed jobs for everyone; and

Whereas, Keeping these families, business owners, and hard workers in the shadows of society serves no one; and

Whereas, Our state, for economic, social, health, security, and prosperity reasons, must support policies that allow individuals to become legal and enfranchised participants in our society and economy; and

Whereas, Comprehensive immigration reform should include a reasonable and timely path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who are already living and working in the United States. Immigration reform should also include comprehensive background checks, require demonstrated proficiency in English and payment of all current and back taxes, and have the flexibility to respond to emerging business trends; and

Whereas, The Migration Policy Institute, a nonpartisan research group in Washington, D.C., estimates that in 2012, the federal government spent \$18 billion on immigration enforcement, and since 2004, the number of United States Border Patrol agents has doubled; and

Whereas, Increased enforcement has given the federal government the ability to prioritize the deportation of lawbreakers and dangerous individuals and to ensure our border's security. Nevertheless, this enforcement should not be done in an inhumane way; and

Whereas, Immigration enforcement should continue to focus on criminals, not on hard-working immigrant families, and not at the expense of effective trade with two of our top three economic partners; and

Whereas, The United States loses large numbers of necessary, highly skilled workers due to the lengthy and complicated processes currently in place to get or keep a legal residency option; and

Whereas, Reform should include an expedited process for those residing abroad and applying for legal visas. Additionally, reform should offer permanent residency opportunities to international students in American universities who are highly trained and in high demand, and in so doing avoid an intellectual vacuum after their graduation; and

Whereas, Reform should recognize the societal and cultural benefits of keeping the family unit intact. The system should take into account special circumstances surrounding candidates for probationary legal status, such as those of minors who were brought to the country as children or workers whose labor is essential to maintain our country's competitiveness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature urges the President and the Congress of the United States to work together and create a comprehensive and workable approach to solving our nation's historically broken immigration system, using the principles described in this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

POM-27. A resolution adopted by the Legislature of Rockland County, New York, urging the United States Senate to introduce and pass legislation similar to H.R. 343, that

would allow volunteer firefighters and emergency medical and rescue personnel to claim services as a charitable contribution to their department; to the Committee on Finance.

POM-28. A resolution adopted by the Tompkins County Legislature of the State of New York asking the United States Congress and the President of the United States to halt the "Fast-Track" process of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and instead, to allow the Trans-Pacific Partnership a fully transparent, public debate in Congress until its impact are fully assessed by all stakeholders, in order to protect the rights of the people of Tompkins County, the best interests of local businesses and workforce, the health of the environment, and the sovereignty of all levels of government; to the Committee on Finance.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

H.R. 651. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the "Sister Ann Keefe Post Office".

S. 179. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14 3rd Avenue, NW, in Chisholm, Minnesota, as the "James L. Oberstar Memorial Post Office Building".

S. 994. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1 Walter Hammond Place in Waldwick, New Jersey, as the "Staff Sergeant Joseph D'Augustine Post Office Building".

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*David Michael Bennett, of North Carolina, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2018.

*Mickey D. Barnett, of New Mexico, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2020.

*Stephen Crawford, of Maryland, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for the remainder of the term expiring December 8, 2015.

*Stephen Crawford, of Maryland, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2022.

*James C. Miller, III, of Virginia, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2017.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. LEE, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 1200. A bill to promote competition and help consumers save money by giving them the freedom to choose where they buy prescription pet medications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 1201. A bill to advance the integration of clean distributed energy into electric grids, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 1202. A bill to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to assist States in adopting updated interconnection procedures and tariff schedules and standards for supplemental, backup, and standby power fees for projects for combined heat and power technology and waste heat to power technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MORAN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. VITTER, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1203. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 1204. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement to provide for management of the free-roaming wild horses in and around the Currituck National Wildlife Refuge; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 1205. A bill to designate the same individual serving as the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health Service as the National Nurse for Public Health; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 1206. A bill to address the concept of "Too Big To Fail" with respect to certain financial entities; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. HIRONO:

S. 1207. A bill to direct the Secretary of Energy to establish a grant program under which the Secretary shall make grants to eligible partnerships to provide for the transformation of the electric grid by the year 2030, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 1208. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to require gas pipeline facilities to accelerate the repair, rehabilitation, and replacement of high-risk pipelines used in commerce, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 1209. A bill to establish State revolving loan funds to repair or replace natural gas distribution pipelines; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mr. CASIDY, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 1210. A bill to provide for the timely consideration of all licenses, permits, and approvals required under Federal law with respect to oil and gas production and distribution; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. STABENOW):

S. 1211. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide that payment