

authorize the establishment of the Stonewall National Historic Site in the State of New York as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

S. 2423

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2423, a bill making appropriations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 2427

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2427, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 27—AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT THAT IS ESSENTIAL TO A FREE SOCIETY AND IS PROTECTED FOR ALL AMERICANS BY THE TEXT OF THE CONSTITUTION, AND RECOGNIZING THE 230TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE VIRGINIA STATUTE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. SASSE, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. RISCH, Mr. COTTON, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. CON. RES. 27

Whereas American democracy is rooted in the fundamental truth that all are created

equal, endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;

Whereas few freedoms were more valued by those who settled this nation than the freedom of conscience, prompting Thomas Jefferson to declare in the Letter to New London Methodists, dated Feb. 4, 1809, that “no provision in our Constitution ought to be dearer to man than that which protects the rights of conscience against the enterprises of the civil authority”;

Whereas the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, which was drafted by Thomas Jefferson and considered by him to be one of his greatest achievements, was enacted on January 16, 1786, and became the forerunner of the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution;

Whereas “the right to freedom of religion undergirds the very origin and existence of the United States”, a freedom which was established by our Nation’s founders “in law, as a fundamental right and as a pillar of our Nation”, as noted in section 2 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998;

Whereas the role of religion in American society and public life has a long and robust tradition;

Whereas those who have studied American democracy from an outside perspective, such as Alexis de Tocqueville, have noted that religion plays a central role in preserving our government because it provides a moral base that is required for democracy to succeed;

Whereas the Supreme Court has affirmed in *Town of Greece v. Galloway* that “people of many faiths may be united in a community of tolerance and devotion”;

Whereas the principle of religious freedom “has guided our Nation forward”, as expressed by the 44th President of the United States in his Presidential Proclamation on Religious Freedom Day in 2011, and “is a universal human right to be protected here at home and across the globe”, as expressed by the 44th President of the United States on the same occasion in 2013;

Whereas “Freedom of religion is a fundamental human right that must be upheld by every nation and guaranteed by every government”, as expressed by the 42nd President of the United States in his Presidential Proclamation on Religious Freedom Day in 1999;

Whereas the First Amendment protects the right of individuals to freely express and act on their religious beliefs, as well as the freedom of all individuals to not be coerced to profess or act on a religious belief to which they do not adhere;

Whereas “our laws and institutions should not impede or hinder but rather should protect and preserve fundamental religious liberties”, as expressed by the 42nd President of the United States in his remarks on signing the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993;

Whereas for countless Americans, their faith is an integral part of every aspect of their daily lives, and is not limited to their homes, to houses of worship, or to doctrinal creeds;

Whereas “religious faith has inspired many of our fellow citizens to help build a better Nation”, where “people of faith continue to wage a determined campaign to meet needs and fight suffering”, as expressed by the 43rd President of the United States in his Presidential Proclamation on Religious Freedom Day in 2003;

Whereas “from its birth to this day, the United States has prized this legacy of religious freedom and honored this heritage by standing for religious freedom and offering refuge to those suffering religious persecution”, as noted in section 2 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998;

Whereas Thomas Jefferson noted in 1822 that the constitutional freedom of religion is “the most inalienable and sacred of all human rights”, and also wrote in 1798 that each right encompassed in the First Amendment is dependent on the others, “thereby guarding in the same sentence, and under the same words, the freedom of religion, of speech, and of the press: inasmuch, that whatever violated either, throws down the sanctuary which covers the others”;

Whereas religious freedom “has been integral to the preservation and development of the United States”, and “the free exercise of religion goes hand in hand with the preservation of our other rights”, as expressed by the 41st President of the United States in his Presidential Proclamation on Religious Freedom Day in 1993; and

Whereas we “continue to proclaim the fundamental right of all peoples to believe and worship according to their own conscience, to affirm their beliefs openly and freely, and to practice their faith without fear or intimidation”, as expressed by the 42nd President of the United States in his Presidential Proclamation on Religious Freedom Day in 1998; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) honors the 230th anniversary of the passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom on Religious Freedom Day, January 16, 2016; and

(2) affirms that—

(A) religious freedom includes the right to live, work, associate, and worship in accordance with one’s beliefs for people of any faith or of no faith;

(B) all Americans can be unified in supporting religious freedom, regardless of differing individual beliefs, because it is a fundamental human right; and

(C) “the American people will remain forever unshackled in matters of faith”, as expressed by the 44th President of the United States in his Presidential Proclamation on Religious Freedom Day in 2012.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the privileges of the floor be granted to Benjamin Reinke, a congressional fellow with the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, effective today through December 31, 2016.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my detailee, Michael Kades, be granted floor privileges through March 21, 2016, while detailed to the U.S. Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator CANTWELL, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to the following individuals with the Committee on Energy and National Resources: Frances Brie Van Cleve, a Democratic fellow, through December 31, 2016; Stephanie Teich-McGoldrick, a Democratic fellow, through December 31, 2016; and Betsy Rosenblatt, a Democratic detailee, through December 31, 2016.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOTICE: REGISTRATION OF MASS MAILINGS

The filing date for the 2015 fourth quarter Mass Mailing report is Monday, January 25, 2016. An electronic option is available on Webster that will allow forms to be submitted via a fillable pdf document. If your office did no mass mailings during this period, please submit a form that states "none."

Mass mailing registrations, or negative reports can be submitted electronically or delivered to the Senate Office of Public Records, 232 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510-7116.

The Senate Office of Public Records is open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. For further information, please contact the Senate Office of Public Records at (202) 224-0322.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, January 20; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each until 12:30 p.m.; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, that at 2:15 p.m. the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 4038, with the time until 2:30 p.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank the majority leader for giving me an opportunity to say a few words before we adjourn this evening.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, some months ago, in the midst of debate on the nuclear agreement with Iran, I came to the Senate floor to remind my colleagues of some recent history involving other negotiations undertaken with troubling regimes that turned out to serve our national security interests.

I reminded my Republican colleagues that John Kennedy negotiated with the Soviet Union during the Cuban missile crisis, saving us from nuclear war. I reminded them that Richard Nixon negotiated with the Chinese on normalizing relations, even while that Communist regime in China was providing weapons to the North Vietnamese, who were using them against American soldiers. I, of course, reminded them that Ronald Reagan negotiated with the Soviets while the Communist nation had thousands of nuclear weapons pointed at the United States, was occupying Eastern Europe, and was supporting troubling regimes around the world.

Let us also recall how many on the right in the political spectrum savaged then President Reagan for negotiating with the Soviets on nuclear arms. Let me read an excerpt from the January 17, 1988, New York Times about the opposition—eerily familiar to what we have been hearing in the debate on the Iran nuclear agreement—Reagan faced in negotiating an arms agreement with the Soviets:

Already, right-wing groups . . . have mounted a strong campaign against the INF treaty. They have mailed out close to 300,000 letters opposing it. They have circulated 5,000 cassette recordings of Gen. Bernard Rogers, former Supreme Commander of NATO, attacking it. And, finally, they are preparing to run newspaper ads this month savaging Reagan as a new Neville Chamberlain, signing an accord with Hitler and glibly predicting "peace for our time."

Conservative Washington Post columnist George Will said in a 1987 Newsweek column of negotiating arms agreements with the Soviets, "Reagan has dramatically advanced the moral and psychological disarmament of the West by emphatically siding with those . . . who emphasize the role of ideology, and hence the radical differentness and dangerousness of the Soviet threat."

The conservative National Review's May 22, 1987, edition had the following cover entitled "Reagan's Suicide Pact" concerning Reagan's negotiation with the Soviets. While opposed by some at the time, few in this Chamber would look back today and say that these negotiations were a mistake or that the agreements that were reached between Reagan and the Soviets didn't actually serve long-term American national security interests.

So we are here today with the fulfillment of the first stage of a historic agreement between world powers and Iran that has effectively eliminated that country's ability to build a nuclear weapon—a weapon that could have threatened our close allies and the world.

Only a few months after this agreement was reached, Iran has met its critical commitments. It destroyed its only source of weapons-grade plutonium by literally pouring concrete into the heart of the reactor. It shipped 98 percent of its low-enriched uranium, at least 25,000 pounds—some 12 tons—of this low-enriched uranium out of the

country. Recall that thanks to the interim agreement, Iran had already shipped out all of its more dangerous highly enriched uranium. It dismantled and removed two-thirds of its centrifuges—thousands of its centrifuges—and it has allowed international inspectors unprecedented access to its nuclear facilities and supply chain.

A simple question to the critics of the Iran nuclear agreement: Today, is Iran closer or further away from the development of a nuclear weapon? The answer is that it is further away. There is no other reasonable conclusion.

Do you remember the speeches given by Prime Minister Netanyahu and many of the critics of this agreement? They were telling us that Iran was weeks away from developing a nuclear weapon. Now by consensus we believe they are at least 1 year away from developing a nuclear weapon if they completely walked away from this agreement. Without a nuclear weapon, Iran is not the same kind of threat to the Middle East, Israel, or to the world.

All of what I said has been verified by international inspectors. Do you recall Ronald Reagan reminding us to trust but verify? We verified. The agreement gives inspectors continued access in perpetuity. In a few months, Iran has gone from a breakout time of a nuclear weapon from a month or 2 to at least 1 year. Quite simply, under Barack Obama's Iran nuclear weapon agreement, their program has finally been brought to a halt without firing a shot—something no previous administration had been able to accomplish. That such a difficult task was accomplished is a testament to the tireless work of our former colleague and current Secretary of State John Kerry and his team. This Senator thinks of all those who worked so hard on this for so many months to achieve it.

Tough diplomacy has also brought home a number of Americans who were unjustly held in Iran. These Americans had not even left Iranian airspace before many of the Republicans running for President unleashed another wave of worn-out rhetoric criticizing the President's effort that led to the release of these Americans being held prisoner. They also failed to offer a substantive alternative approach. Let me remind the naysayers that it was Ronald Reagan who traded weapons to Iran for seven American hostages being held by Iranian terrorists in Lebanon—not a handful of nonviolent sanctions violators but weapons to what was then our arch enemy who had only recently held more than 60 American diplomats as hostages for 444 days. By the time the sales were discovered, more than 1,500 missiles had been shipped by the Reagan administration to Iran and only 3 hostages had been released. They in turn were replaced with three more, sadly, in what then-Secretary of State George Shultz called "a hostage bazaar."

I have met the families of those held hostage, and I can't say what I would