

S. 652

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 652, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

S. 720

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 720, a bill to amend the Export Administration Act of 1979 to include in the prohibitions on boycotts against allies of the United States boycotts fostered by international governmental organizations against Israel and to direct the Export-Import Bank of the United States to oppose boycotts against Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 926

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 926, a bill to authorize the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation to establish the National Global War on Terrorism Memorial as a commemorative work in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

S. 1024

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1024, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reform the rights and processes relating to appeals of decisions regarding claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1122

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1122, a bill to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to clarify when the time period for the issuance of citations under such Act begins and to require a rule to clarify that an employer's duty to make and maintain accurate records of work-related injuries and illnesses is an ongoing obligation.

S. 1182

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1182, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion.

S. 1356

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1356, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the use of Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to pursue independent study programs at certain educational institutions that are not institutions of higher learning, and for other purposes.

S. 1404

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1404, a bill to amend the Natural Gas Act to provide for expanded natural gas exports.

S. 1414

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1414, a bill to state the policy of the United States on the minimum number of available battle force ships.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1455, a bill to amend the United States Energy Storage Competitiveness Act of 2007 to direct the Secretary of Energy to establish new goals for the Department of Energy relating to energy storage and to carry out certain demonstration projects relating to energy storage.

S. 1457

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1457, a bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to direct the Secretary of Energy to carry out demonstration projects relating to advanced nuclear reactor technologies to support domestic energy needs.

S. 1474

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1474, a bill to prohibit the use of fiscal year 2018 funds for the closure, consolidation, or elimination of certain offices of the Environmental Protection Agency.

S. 1512

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1512, a bill to prohibit the Secretary of Energy, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality from considering, in taking any action, the social cost of carbon, the social cost of methane, the social cost of nitrous oxide, or the social cost of any other greenhouse gas, unless compliant with Office of Management and Budget guidance, and for other purposes.

S. 1547

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1547, a bill to nullify the effect of the recent Executive order that establishes an "election integrity" commission, which will be used and is designed to support policies that will suppress the vote in minority and poor communities across the United States.

S. 1564

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey

(Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1564, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit legally married same-sex couples to amend their filing status for returns outside the 3-year limitation.

S. RES. 114

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 114, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen.

S. RES. 139

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 139, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1574. A bill to impose sanctions on individuals who are complicit in human rights abuses committed against nationals of Vietnam or their family members, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. CORNYN. 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. 1574

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Vietnam Human Rights Sanctions Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The relationship between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has grown substantially since the end of the trade embargo in 1994, with annual trade between the countries reaching more than \$36,000,000,000 in 2014.

(2) However, the transition by the Government of Vietnam toward greater economic activity and trade, which has led to increased bilateral engagement between the United States and Vietnam, has not been matched by greater political freedom or substantial improvements in basic human rights for the people of Vietnam.

(3) Vietnam remains an authoritarian state ruled by the Communist Party of Vietnam, which continues to deny the right of the people of Vietnam to participate in free and fair elections.

(4) According to the Department of State's 2014 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Vietnam's "most significant human rights problems . . . were severe government restrictions of citizens' political rights, particularly their right to change their government through free and fair elections; limits

on citizens' civil liberties, including freedom of assembly and expression; and inadequate protection of citizens' due process rights, including protection against arbitrary detention".

(5) The Country Reports also state that the Government of Vietnam "continued to restrict speech that criticized individual government leaders; promoted political pluralism or multi-party democracy; or questioned policies on sensitive matters, such as human rights, religious freedom, or sovereignty disputes with China" and "sought to impede criticism by monitoring meetings and communications of political activists".

(6) Furthermore, the Department of State documents that "arbitrary arrest and detention, particularly for political activists, remained a problem", with the Government of Vietnam sentencing 29 arrested activists during 2014. Of those, 6 activists were convicted on national security charges in the penal code for "undermining the unity policy", 17 for "causing public disorder", and 6 for "abusing democratic freedoms".

(7) At the end of 2014, the Government of Vietnam reportedly held more than 125 political prisoners.

(8) On September 24, 2012, 3 prominent Vietnamese bloggers—Nguyen Van Hai (also known as Dieu Cay), Ta Phong Tan, and Phan Thanh Hai (also known as Anh Ba Saigon)—were sentenced to prison based on 3-year-old blog postings criticizing the Government and leaders of Vietnam and the Communist Party of Vietnam. Nguyen Van Hai served 2 years of a 12-year prison sentence on charges of "conducting propaganda against the state" but was later released and departed from Vietnam. If he were to return, he would likely have to complete his prison sentence.

(9) United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay responded to the sentencing of the bloggers on September 25, 2012, stating that "[t]he harsh prison terms handed down to bloggers exemplify the severe restrictions on freedom of expression in Vietnam" and calling the sentences an "unfortunate development that undermines the commitments Vietnam has made internationally . . . to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression".

(10) On March 21, 2013, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Daniel B. Baer testified before the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate that "in Vietnam we've been disappointed in recent years to see backsliding, particularly on . . . freedom of expression issues . . . people are being prosecuted for what they say online under really draconian national security laws . . . that is an issue that we continue to raise, both in our human rights dialogue with the Vietnamese as well as in other bilateral engagements".

(11) Although the Constitution of Vietnam provides for freedom of religion, the Department of State's 2013 International Religious Freedom Report maintains, "Government practices and bureaucratic impediments restricted religious freedom. Unregistered and unrecognized religious groups were often subject to harassment, as well as coercive and punitive actions by authorities".

(12) Likewise, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2015 Annual Report states, "The Vietnamese government continues to control all religious activities through law and administrative oversight, restrict severely independent religious practice, and repress individuals and religious groups it views as challenging its authority, including independent Buddhists, Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, Catholics, and Protestants."

(13) The 2013 Annual Report notes that in 2004 the United States designated Vietnam as a country of particular concern for religious freedom pursuant to section 402(b)(1) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6442(b)(1)), and that Vietnam responded at that time by releasing prisoners, prohibiting the policy of forced renunciations of faith, and expanding protections for religious groups, and that "[m]ost religious leaders in Vietnam attributed these positive changes to the [country of particular concern] designation and the priority placed on religious freedom concerns in U.S.-Vietnamese bilateral relations".

(14) However, the 2013 Annual Report concludes that since the designation as a country of particular concern was lifted from Vietnam in 2006, "religious freedom conditions in Vietnam remain mixed", and therefore recommends to the Department of State that Vietnam should be redesignated as a country of particular concern.

(15) Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Baer likewise testified that "[i]n Vietnam the right to religious freedom, which seemed to be improving several years ago, has been stagnant for several years".

SEC. 3. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS ON CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE COMPLICIT IN HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES COMMITTED AGAINST NATIONALS OF VIETNAM OR THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMITTED; ALIEN; IMMIGRATION LAWS; NATIONAL.—The terms "admitted", "alien", "immigration laws", and "national" have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(3) CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE.—The term "Convention against Torture" means the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, done at New York on December 10, 1984.

(4) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term "United States person" means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

(b) IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS.—Except as provided in subsections (e) and (f), the President shall impose the sanctions described in subsection (d) with respect to each individual on the list required by subsection (c)(1).

(c) LIST OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE COMPLICIT IN CERTAIN HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of individuals who are nationals of Vietnam that the President determines are complicit in human rights abuses committed against nationals of Vietnam or their family members, regardless of whether such abuses occurred in Vietnam.

(2) UPDATES OF LIST.—The President shall submit to the appropriate congressional

committees an updated list under paragraph (1) as new information becomes available and not less frequently than annually.

(3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The list required by paragraph (1) shall be made available to the public and posted on the Web sites of the Department of the Treasury and the Department of State.

(4) CONSIDERATION OF DATA FROM OTHER COUNTRIES AND NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.—In preparing the list required by paragraph (1), the President shall consider data already obtained by other countries and nongovernmental organizations, including organizations in Vietnam, that monitor the human rights abuses of the Government of Vietnam.

(d) SANCTIONS.—

(1) PROHIBITION ON ENTRY AND ADMISSION TO THE UNITED STATES.—An individual on the list required by subsection (c)(1) may not—

(A) be admitted to, enter, or transit through the United States;

(B) receive any lawful immigration status in the United States under the immigration laws, including any relief under the Convention Against Torture; or

(C) file any application or petition to obtain such admission, entry, or status.

(2) FINANCIAL SANCTIONS.—The President shall block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of an individual on the list required by subsection (c)(1) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(e) EXCEPTIONS TO COMPLY WITH INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.—The President may, by regulation, authorize exceptions to the imposition of sanctions under this section to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, and other applicable international agreements.

(f) WAIVER.—The President may waive the requirement to impose or maintain sanctions with respect to an individual under subsection (b) or the requirement to include an individual on the list required by subsection (c)(1) if the President—

(1) determines that such a waiver is in the national interest of the United States; and

(2) submits to the appropriate congressional committees a report describing the reasons for the determination.

(g) TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS.—The provisions of this section shall terminate on the date on which the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of Vietnam has—

(1) unconditionally released all political prisoners;

(2) ceased its practices of violence, unlawful detention, torture, and abuse of nationals of Vietnam while those nationals are engaging in peaceful political activity; and

(3) conducted a transparent investigation into the killings, arrest, and abuse of peaceful political activists in Vietnam and prosecuted those responsible.

SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON DESIGNATION OF VIETNAM AS A COUNTRY OF PARTICULAR CONCERN WITH RESPECT TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the relationship between the United States and Vietnam cannot progress while the record of the Government of Vietnam with respect to human rights and the rule of law continues to deteriorate;

(2) the designation of Vietnam as a country of particular concern for religious freedom

pursuant to section 402(b)(1) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6442(b)(1)) would be a powerful and effective tool in highlighting abuses of religious freedom in Vietnam and in encouraging improvement in the respect for human rights in Vietnam; and

(3) the Secretary of State should, in accordance with the recommendation of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, designate Vietnam as a country of particular concern for religious freedom.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 259. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1519, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 259. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1519, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1088. MODIFICATION TO THE HUBZONE PROGRAM.

Section 3(p)(4)(C) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(p)(4)(C)) is amended by striking “until the later of” and all that follows and inserting “for the 7-year period following the date on which the census tract or nonmetropolitan county ceased to be so qualified.”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I have 9 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session

of the Senate on Tuesday, July 18, 2017, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to consider a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 18, 2017, at 2:30 p.m., in open session to consider the nominations.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 18, 2017 at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing to consider nominations.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate in order to hold a hearing on Tuesday, July 18, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. in Room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 18, 2017, at 9 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Comprehensive Tax Reform: Prospects and Challenges.”

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 18, 2017, at 11 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to consider the nomination of David J. Kautter, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, vice Mark J. Mazur.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 18, 2017 at 10 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled “Nominations.”

COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the 115th Congress of the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, July 18, 2017 from 3:30 pm–5:00 pm, in room SH-219 of the Senate Hart Office Building to hold a Closed Member Briefing.

COMMITTEE ON MULTILATERAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS, AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT

The Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Multilateral International Development, Multilateral In-

stitutions, and International Economic, Energy, and Environmental policy be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 18, 2017 at 2:30 p.m., to hold a hearing entitled “‘The Four Famines’: Root Causes and a Multilateral Action Plan.”

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Myles Odermann, an intern in my office, be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's session of the Senate.

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

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, July 19; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Bush nomination; finally, that the time until the cloture vote on the Bush nomination be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

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.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:19 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, July 19, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate July 18, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

PATRICK M. SHANAHAN, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.