

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 28, 2017, AS “HONORING THE NATION’S FIRST RESPONDERS DAY”

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 183, S. Con. Res. 15.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 15) expressing support for the designation of October 28, 2017, as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day.”

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment, as follows:

(The part of the concurrent resolution intended to be stricken is shown in boldface brackets and the part of the concurrent resolution intended to be inserted is shown in italics.)

S. CON. RES. 15

Whereas first responders include professional and volunteer fire, police, emergency medical technician, and paramedic workers in the United States;

Whereas there are more than 25,300,000 first responders in the United States working to keep communities safe;

Whereas first responders deserve to be recognized for their commitment to safety, defense, and honor; and

Whereas October 28, 2017, would be an appropriate day to establish as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) supports the designation of October 28, 2017, as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”;

(2) honors and recognizes the contributions of first responders; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the contributions of first responders in the United States.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to, the concurrent resolution, as amended, be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The committee-reported amendment was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 15), as amended, was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, as amended, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 15

Whereas first responders include professional and volunteer fire, police, emergency

medical technician, and paramedic workers in the United States;

Whereas there are more than 25,300,000 first responders in the United States working to keep communities safe;

Whereas first responders deserve to be recognized for their commitment to safety, defense, and honor; and

Whereas October 28, 2017, would be an appropriate day to establish as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) supports the designation of October 28, 2017, as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”;

(2) honors and recognizes the contributions of first responders; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the contributions of first responders in the United States.

FACILITATING CONSTRUCTION OF A BRIDGE ON CERTAIN PROPERTY IN CHRISTIAN COUNTY, MISSOURI

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 192, S. 810.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 810) to facilitate construction of a bridge on certain property in Christian County, Missouri, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. RIVERSIDE BRIDGE PROJECT.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—The Riverside Bridge Project is authorized to be carried out notwithstanding—

(1) any agreement entered into under, or restriction pursuant to, section 404(b)(2) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c(b)(2)); or

(2) any easement or other Federal restriction pursuant to that Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) that requires the covered property to be maintained for open space, recreation, or wetland management.

(b) *CONDITIONS.*—As a condition of the authorization under subsection (a)—

(1) Christian County, Missouri, or an assignee shall—

(A) carry out the Riverside Bridge Project in a manner that ensures that no flood damage attributable to the Project occurs; and

(B) be liable for any such flood damage that does occur; and

(2) the Federal Government shall not be liable for future flood damage that is caused by the Project.

(c) *DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROHIBITED.*—No future disaster assistance from any Federal source may be provided with respect to the covered property or any improvements thereon.

(d) *DEFINITIONS.*—In this Act, the following definitions apply:

(1) *COVERED PROPERTY.*—The term “covered property” means the property—

(A) in Christian County, Missouri;

(B) conveyed to such County by the Riverside Inn, Inc.; and

(C) that is approximately 1.5 acres and 482 lineal feet adjacent to the westerly line of Riverside Road to the center of Finley Creek.

(2) *RIVERSIDE BRIDGE PROJECT.*—The term “Riverside Bridge Project” means the project to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge on and over the covered property.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be considered and agreed to, the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 810), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

THE AMERICAN LEGION 100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 1182 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1182) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent that the Young amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to, and the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

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

The amendment (No. 772) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

In section 7(d), in the subsection heading, strike “GAO AUDIT” and insert “AUDIT”.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

The bill (S. 1182), as amended, was passed, as follows:

S. 1182

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 American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) on March 15, 1919, The American Legion was founded in Paris, France, by members of the American Expeditionary Force occupying Europe after World War I and concerned about the welfare of their comrades and communities upon their return to the United States;

(2) on September 16, 1919, Congress chartered The American Legion, which quickly grew to become the largest veterans service organization in the United States;

(3) The American Legion conferences in Washington, DC, in 1923 and 1924 crafted the first United States Flag Code, which was adopted in schools, States, cities and counties prior to being enacted in 1942, establishing the proper use, display, and respect for the colors of the United States;

(4) during World War II, The American Legion developed and presented to Congress its case for vastly improved support for medically discharged, disabled veterans, which ultimately became the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (58 Stat. 284; chapter 268), better known as the G.I. Bill of Rights, and was drafted by former American Legion National Commander Harry W. Colmery in Washington's Mayflower Hotel;

(5) through the leadership and advocacy of The American Legion, the G.I. Bill was enacted in June 1944, which led to monumental changes in United States society, including the democratization of higher education, home ownership for average people in the United States, better VA hospitals, business and farm loans for veterans, and the ability to appeal conditions of military discharge;

(6) defying those who argued the G.I. Bill would break the Treasury, according to various researchers, the G.I. Bill provided a tremendous return on investment of \$7 to the United States economy for every \$1 spent on the program, triggering a half-century of prosperity in the United States;

(7) after Hurricane Hugo in 1989, The American Legion established the National Emergency Fund to provide immediate cash relief for veterans who have been affected by natural disasters;

(8) American Legion National Emergency Fund grants after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, for instance, exceeded \$1,700,000;

(9) The American Legion fought to see the Veterans Administration elevated to Cabinet-level status as the Department of Veterans Affairs, ensuring support for veterans would be set at the highest level of the Federal Government, as a priority issue for the President;

(10) after a decades-long struggle to improve the adjudication process for veterans disputing claims decisions, The American Legion helped shape and introduce the Veterans Reassurance Act to create a venue for judicial review of veterans' appeals;

(11) building on these efforts, legislation was passed in 1988 to create the United States Court of Veterans Appeals, today known as the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims;

(12) The American Legion created the American Legacy Scholarship Fund for children of military members killed on active duty on or after September 11, 2001;

(13) in 2016, The American Legion's National Executive Committee amended the original scholarship criteria to include children of veterans with 50 percent or greater VA disability ratings;

(14) President George W. Bush signed into law the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act (title V of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008; 122 Stat. 2357), a next-generation G.I. Bill strongly supported by The American Legion and the most comprehensive educational benefits package since the original G.I. Bill of Rights was enacted in 1944;

(15) in August 2018, The American Legion will begin its centennial recognition at the 100th National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the site of the first American Legion National Convention; and

(16) in March 2019, the organization will celebrate its 100th birthday in Paris, France, and September 16, 2019, will mark the 100th anniversary of The American Legion's Federal charter.

SEC. 3. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.

(a) DENOMINATIONS.—In recognition and celebration of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion, the Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the "Secretary") shall mint and issue the following coins:

(1) \$5 GOLD COINS.—Not more than 50,000 \$5 coins, which shall—

- (A) weigh 8.359 grams;
- (B) have a diameter of 0.850 inches; and
- (C) contain not less than 90 percent gold.

(2) \$1 SILVER COINS.—Not more than 400,000 \$1 coins, which shall—

- (A) weigh 26.73 grams;
- (B) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and
- (C) contain not less than 90 percent silver.

(3) HALF-DOLLAR CLAD COINS.—Not more than 750,000 half-dollar coins which shall—

- (A) weigh 11.34 grams;
- (B) have a diameter of 1.205 inches; and
- (C) be minted to the specifications for half-dollar coins contained in section 5112(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this Act shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of title 31, United States Code.

(c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins minted under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 4. DESIGN OF COINS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The design for the coins minted under this Act shall be emblematic of The American Legion.

(b) DESIGNATIONS AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On each coin minted under this Act there shall be—

- (1) a designation of the denomination of the coin;
- (2) an inscription of the year "2019"; and
- (3) inscriptions of the words "Liberty", "In God We Trust", "United States of America", and "E Pluribus Unum".

(c) SELECTION.—The design for the coins minted under this Act shall be—

- (1) selected by the Secretary after consultation with—

- (A) the Commission of Fine Arts; and
- (B) the Adjutant of The American Legion, as defined in the constitution and bylaws of The American Legion; and

(2) reviewed by the Citizens Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee.

SEC. 5. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) QUALITY OF COINS.—Coins minted under this Act shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) PERIOD FOR ISSUANCE.—The Secretary may issue coins minted under this Act only during the 1-year period beginning on January 1, 2019.

SEC. 6. SALE OF COINS.

(a) SALE PRICE.—The coins issued under this Act shall be sold by the Secretary at a price based upon the sum of—

- (1) the face value of the coins;
- (2) the surcharge provided in section 7(a) with respect to such coins; and
- (3) the cost of designing and issuing the coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping).

(b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk sales of the coins issued under this Act at a reasonable discount.

(c) PREPAID ORDERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept prepaid orders for the coins minted under this Act before the issuance of such coins.

(2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to prepaid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a reasonable discount.

SEC. 7. SURCHARGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—All sales of coins minted under this Act shall include a surcharge as follows:

(1) A surcharge of \$35 per coin for the \$5 coin.

(2) A surcharge of \$10 per coin for the \$1 coin described under section 3(a)(2).

(3) A surcharge of \$5 per coin for the half-dollar coin.

(b) DISTRIBUTION.—Subject to section 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code, all surcharges received by the Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this Act shall be promptly paid by the Secretary to The American Legion for costs related to—

(1) promoting the importance of, and caring for, those who have served in uniform, ensuring they receive proper health care and disability benefits earned through military service;

(2) promoting the importance of, and caring for, those who are still serving in the Armed Forces;

(3) promoting the importance of maintaining the patriotic values, morals, culture, and citizenship of the United States; and

(4) promoting the importance of maintaining strong families, assistance for at-risk children, and activities that promote their healthy and wholesome development.

(c) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), no surcharge may be included with respect to the issuance under this Act of any coin during a calendar year if, as of the time of such issuance, the issuance of such coin would result in the number of commemorative coin programs issued during such year to exceed the annual commemorative coin program issuance limitation under section 5112(m)(1) of title 31, United States Code (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act). The Secretary of the Treasury may issue guidance to carry out this subsection.

(d) AUDIT.—Each recipient described in subsection (b) shall be subject to the audit requirements of section 5134(f)(2) of title 31, United States Code, with regard to the amounts received under subsection (b).

SEC. 8. FINANCIAL ASSURANCES.

The Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that—

(1) minting and issuing coins under this Act will not result in any net cost to the United States Government; and

(2) no funds, including applicable surcharges, are disbursed to any recipient designated in section 7 until the total cost of designing and issuing all of the coins authorized by this Act (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping) is recovered by the United States Treasury, consistent with sections 5112(m) and 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

JAVIER VEGA, JR. MEMORIAL ACT OF 2017

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 1617 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1617) to designate the checkpoint of the United States Border Patrol located on United States Highway 77 North in Sarita, Texas, as the "Javier Vega, Jr. Border Patrol Checkpoint."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 1617) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1617

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 "Javier Vega, Jr. Memorial Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) A native of La Feria, Texas, Border Patrol Agent Javier Vega, Jr., served his country first a member of the United States Marines Corps and then proudly as a border patrol agent in the canine division with his dog, Goldie.

(2) Agent Vega was assigned to the Kingsville, Texas, Border Patrol Station as a canine handler and worked primarily at the Sarita Border Patrol Checkpoint.

(3) On August 3, 2014, Agent Vega was on a fishing trip with his family near Raymondville, Texas, when 2 criminal aliens attempted to rob and attack them.

(4) Agent Vega was shot and killed while attempting to subdue the assailants and protecting his family.

(5) Agent Vega is survived by his wife, parents, 3 sons, brother, sister-in-law, niece, and dog, Goldie.

SEC. 3. DESIGNATION.

The checkpoint of the United States Border Patrol located on United States Highway 77 North in Sarita, Texas, shall be known and designated as the "Javier Vega, Jr. Border Patrol Checkpoint".

SEC. 4. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the checkpoint described in section 3 shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Javier Vega, Jr. Border Patrol Checkpoint".

REMOVING THE SUNSET PROVISION OF SECTION 203 OF PUBLIC LAW 105-384

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consider-

ation of H.R. 374, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 374) to remove the sunset provision of section 203 of Public Law 105-384, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 374) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

COMMEMORATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SILICON VALLEY LEADERSHIP GROUP

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 209 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 209) commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, the preeminent public policy trade association in Silicon Valley.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 209) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of June 28, 2017, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL ESTUARIES WEEK

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 230 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 230) designating the week of September 16 through September 23, 2017, as "National Estuaries Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 230) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of July 24, 2017, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 247, S. Res. 248, and S. Res. 249.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1757

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1757) to strengthen border security, increase resources for enforcement of immigration laws, and for other purposes.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the