

criminal and civil law relating to sex trafficking.

S. 1746

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1746, a bill to require the Congressional Budget Office to make publicly available the fiscal and mathematical models, data, and other details of computations used in cost analysis and scoring.

S. 1757

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1757, a bill to strengthen border security, increase resources for enforcement of immigration laws, and for other purposes.

S. 1767

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1767, a bill to reauthorize the farm to school program, and for other purposes.

S. 1779

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1779, a bill to repeal certain provisions of the Federal Switchblade Act to allow domestic manufacturers to ship and sell their products to buyers located in other States and to permit the importation of certain knife parts.

S. 1787

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1787, a bill to reauthorize the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992.

S. 1806

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1806, a bill to amend the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 and the Head Start Act to promote child care and early learning, and for other purposes.

S. 1808

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1808, a bill to extend temporarily the Federal Perkins Loan program, and for other purposes.

S. 1816

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1816, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to enhance fraud alert procedures and provide free access to credit freezes, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 250

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 250, a resolution condemning horrific acts of violence against Burma's Rohingya

population and calling on Aung San Suu Kyi to play an active role in ending this humanitarian tragedy.

AMENDMENT NO. 329

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 329 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 812

At the request of Mr. BROWN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 812 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 814

At the request of Mr. BROWN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 814 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 942

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 942 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 1020

At the request of Ms. HARRIS, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1020 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 1032

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1032 proposed to H.R. 2810, 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 1033

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1033 proposed to H.R. 2810, 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 1088

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1088 proposed to H.R. 2810, 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.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. 1824. A bill to reform the Appalachian Regional Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr President, for decades, I have supported the Appalachian Regional Commission, or ARC, and its mission to invest in communities to strengthen economic growth throughout the Appalachian region.

As I have expressed before, however, I have grown frustrated by ARC's shortcomings. Last year, the Senate considered an amendment to abolish ARC entirely. I voted against that proposal because I believe that the Commission still serves an important purpose, but since that time I've been calling on ARC to clarify its clouded focus.

For instance, because of ARC's own rules, the most distressed counties in the region can only receive up to 30% of its area development funds. In other words, a substantial portion of the agency's resources—which should be focused on alleviating poverty—are intentionally directed away from the counties most in need of help. This has been a criticism leveled against ARC for years. I believe that, if ARC serves a valid purpose today, then it is to assist the most impoverished counties in the region.

Moreover, while the other regional commissions are headquartered in the areas for which they're designed to serve, ARC maintains its primary office right here in Washington, D.C. An expensive office near Dupont Circle, far

away from the people and the communities it serves, is not the right place for ARC.

Today, I will introduce legislation along with my friend and longtime ARC champion, Congressman HAL ROGERS, to make desperately needed reforms at ARC. Our bill is designed to reform the Commission, to focus its mission on investing more in the poorest Appalachian communities, and to direct ARC's leadership to relocate the organization to the region it serves.

These common-sense reforms will help set ARC on a path toward fulfilling what should be its central mission—poverty alleviation—and delivering vital assistance to those who need it the most. I hope that all of my colleagues will join with me to move this legislation forward and provide necessary relief to communities in Appalachia.

Mr. McCONNELL. 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. 1824

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 “Appalachian Regional Commission Reform Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

(a) HEADQUARTERS.—Congress finds that—
(1) regional commissions, such as the Delta Regional Authority, the Denali Commission, and the Northern Border Regional Commission, are each headquartered in their respective region;

(2) headquartering regional commissions within the region affected is a sensible approach to ensure that the commissions are housed in more affordable locations than the District of Columbia, thereby reducing administrative overhead and making the commissions closer and more accountable to the people the commissions were designed to serve;

(3) the Appalachian Regional Commission (referred to in this Act as the “Commission”) is not headquartered in Appalachia but in Washington, D.C.; and

(4) the headquarters of the Commission should be relocated from the District of Columbia to a more affordable location in the Appalachian region so that it is closer and more accountable to the people the Commission was designed to serve.

(b) PERFORMANCE.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Commission was created to help foster economic opportunity and close health and educational disparities in a geographic region of the United States beleaguered by persistent poverty and high unemployment;

(2) the Commission remains the sole Federal agency focused singularly on economic revitalization in the Appalachian region;

(3) in 1998, Congress charged the Commission with “address[ing] the needs of severely and persistently distressed areas of the Appalachian region and focus[ing] special attention on the areas of greatest need”; and

(4) the Commission has long been criticized for its shortcomings in fulfilling this mission, including in—

(A) a 1999 study titled “Mountain Money: Federal Tax Dollars Miss the Mark in Core Appalachia” by Mark Ferencik and Jill Ripenhoff for the Columbus Dispatch; and

(B) a 2008 book titled “Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945” by Ronald D. Eller;

(5) in 2004, the Office of Management and Budget noted the importance of the Commission “[f]ocusing efforts on...targeting assistance to areas of distress”;

(6) in 2017, Citizens Against Government Waste characterized the programming of the Commission as duplicative and called for drastic reductions in the budget of the Commission;

(7) in 2017, the Office of Management and Budget, citing a Government Accountability Office study, concluded that the Commission should be abolished, and that conclusion was reflected in the fiscal year 2018 budget request submitted by the President;

(8) these recent actions reflect a growing chorus that the Commission should be reformed; and

(9) therefore, given the long-recognized shortcomings of the Commission, the long-standing criticism of the Commission, and the need to ensure its optimal performance, the time has arrived for the Commission to be reformed.

(c) PERSISTENT POVERTY.—Congress finds that—

(1) using 1960 data, the Commission (which was created in 1965) concluded that there were 214 distressed counties in the Appalachian region;

(2) in 2017, according to the Commission, there are 84 distressed counties in the Appalachian region, reflecting the areas of most persistent poverty in the region; and

(3) therefore, the Commission should be reformed to focus its attention on the areas of most persistent poverty in the region.

(d) AREA DEVELOPMENT FUNDING FOR DISTRESSED COUNTIES.—Congress finds that—

(1) according to the study by the Columbus Dispatch referred to in subsection (b)(4)(A), of the 22,169 grants issued by the Commission from fiscal year 1966 through fiscal year 1998, none of the 5 counties that received the most Commission funding was considered distressed, and more than ¼ of all Commission spending during that period went to States with few, if any, distressed counties;

(2) according to author Ronald D. Eller in 2014, “[the Commission] policies have concentrated resources in a select few ‘growth centers’ in the [Appalachian] region, expanding services to the poor and growing the mountain middle class, but doing little to alter conditions in the most rural distressed counties or to address systemic political or economic inequalities throughout Appalachia”;

(3) until 1995, the Commission allocated up to 20 percent of its area development grants for use in distressed counties;

(4) following instructions given to the Commission by the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives in 1995, this allocation was increased by the Commission to 30 percent;

(5) section 7.5(c) of the Code of the Commission (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act) reflects this 1995 policy change and states that the Commission “will allocate up to 30 percent of Commission area development funds for use in distressed counties”, even though, according to the Commission’s public representations, economic conditions in distressed areas of the Appalachian region have not greatly improved since the 1960s;

(6) given the persistent levels of poverty in the distressed counties in the Appalachian region, more area development funding and emphasis should be devoted to those counties; and

(7) therefore, the allocation described in paragraph (3) should be increased to 60 percent.

(e) GRANT EXPENDITURES.—Congress finds that—

(1) section 14524(d) of title 40, United States Code, provides that “not less than 50 percent of the amount of grant expenditures the Commission approves shall support activities or projects that benefit severely and persistently distressed counties and areas”;

(2) given the persistent levels of poverty in the distressed counties in the Appalachian region, more grant expenditures and emphasis should be devoted to those counties; and

(3) therefore, the 50 percent threshold in section 14524(d) of title 40, United States Code, should be increased to 60 percent.

SEC. 3. MISSION OF THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION.

Section 14301 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT AND MISSION.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is an Appalachian Regional Commission (referred to in this chapter as the ‘Commission’).

“(2) MISSION.—The mission of the Commission shall be to focus primarily on poverty reduction and economic development in areas in the Appalachian region with the most persistent poverty.”.

SEC. 4. HEADQUARTERS OF THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 14301 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) HEADQUARTERS.—The headquarters of the Commission shall be located in the Appalachian region.”.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Federal Chairman of the Commission shall take such actions as may be necessary to carry out the amendment made by subsection (a).

SEC. 5. GRANT EXPENDITURES.

Section 14524(d) of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking “50 percent” and inserting “60 percent”.

SEC. 6. AREA DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR DISTRESSED COUNTIES.

Section 14526(b) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “In program and” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In program and”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) AREA DEVELOPMENT FUNDS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds made available for each fiscal year for the Area Development Program of the Commission, the Commission shall allocate not less than 60 percent for projects in counties for which a distressed county designation is in effect under this section.

“(B) METHODOLOGY.—The methodology for determining whether a county is designated as a distressed county under subsection (a)(1)(A) shall be the methodology in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Appalachian Regional Commission Reform Act.

“(3) REPORT.—The Commission shall submit an annual report that describes the allocation of funds, in dollar amounts and percentage of total appropriations, for the Area Development Program to counties described in paragraph (2) to—

“(A) the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

“(B) the minority leader of the House of Representatives;

“(C) the majority leader of the Senate;

“(D) the minority leader of the Senate;

“(E) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

“(F) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

“(G) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

“(H) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate.”.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KING, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1828. A bill to change the date for regularly scheduled general elections for Federal office to the first Saturday and Sunday after the first Friday in November in every even-numbered year; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am pleased to be joined by Senators KLOBUCHAR, BROWN, KING, FRANKEN, and WHITEHOUSE in introducing the Weekend Voting Act. This bill makes voting in Federal elections easier and more accessible through one simple change: moving Election Day from Tuesday to the following Saturday and Sunday in November of an election year.

We know from surveys and common sense that Tuesday voting stands in the way of greater voter participation. In 1845, Congress set Tuesday as Election Day because it was the easiest day for farmers—then travelling by horse and buggy—to make it to the polls in the course of their regular Tuesday trips to bring goods to market. Tuesday voting has no such benefit for farmers, or anyone else, in the 21st Century. It does, however, force many Americans to choose between their workday and family responsibilities, and participation in our democratic process.

According to the Pew Research Center, voter turnout in the United States regularly lags behind other developed countries, many of which hold elections on one or more days during the weekend. According to U.S. Census data, the most consistent reason Americans give for not voting is that they are too busy to get away from their daily lives to make it to the polls.

The Weekend Voting Act would give Americans the ability to vote during times that make better sense for them. Rather than on a Tuesday, polls would stay open during the first Saturday and Sunday after the first Friday in November of an election year. States would retain full autonomy to continue to offer alternatives to Election Day voting, such as early voting or voting by mail, and States are encouraged to give special consideration to accommodate weekend religious practices.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to support the Weekend Voting Act so that more Americans can take part in our democratic process by voting at times that work for them.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 260—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2017 AS “SCHOOL BUS SAFETY MONTH”

Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 260

Whereas, every school day in the United States, approximately 500,000 public and private school buses carry more than 26,000,000 children to and from school;

Whereas school buses comprise the largest mass transportation fleet in the United States;

Whereas 55 percent of all K–12 students ride a school bus, totaling 260,000,000 miles for each of the 180 school days in a year, or 46,800,000,000 miles driven annually;

Whereas the Child Safety Network, celebrating 28 years of national public service, supports the CSN Safe Bus campaign, which is designed to provide the latest technology and free safety and security resources to the school bus industry;

Whereas the designation of School Bus Safety Month will allow broadcast and digital media and social networking industries to make commitments to disseminate public service announcements that are produced in order to—

- (1) provide resources designed to safeguard children; and
- (2) recognize school bus drivers and professionals;

Whereas key leaders who are deserving of recognition during School Bus Safety Month and beyond have provided security awareness training materials to more than 14,000 public and private school districts, trained more than 80,000 school bus operators, and provided more than 80,000 counterterrorism guides to individuals who are key to providing both safety and security for children in the United States; and

Whereas School Bus Safety Month offers the Senate and the people of the United States an opportunity to recognize and thank all of the school bus drivers in the United States and the professionals who are focused on school bus safety and security: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates September 2017 as “School Bus Safety Month”.

SENATE RESOLUTION 261—RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2017 AS “ALASKA WILD SALMON MONTH”

Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 261

Whereas the sustainable Alaska wild salmon commercial fishery contributes over 38,000 jobs and nearly \$2,000,000,000 in annual labor income to the United States economy;

Whereas the commercial Alaska wild salmon harvest comprises approximately 50 percent of the wild salmon caught worldwide;

Whereas the sport fishing industry of the State of Alaska generates \$500,000,000 in economic output and creates 4,500 jobs annually;

Whereas wild salmon returning to Alaskan streams and rearing young in Alaskan water are the basis for one of the most valuable and important industries of the State of Alaska;

Whereas commercial and sport salmon fishing and processing provides the greatest number of private-sector employment opportunities in the State of Alaska;

Whereas many Alaskans depend heavily on subsistence-caught wild salmon for food and cultural purposes;

Whereas Alaska Natives have relied on Alaska wild salmon for thousands of years, and Alaska wild salmon continues to comprise up to 70 percent of the subsistence harvest of many Alaska Native communities; and

Whereas, in September 2017, Alaska Wild Salmon Month celebrates and raises aware-

ness nationwide regarding the contributions of Alaska wild salmon to the health and economy of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes September 2017 as “Alaska Wild Salmon Month”; and

(2) encourages individuals, corporations, and other relevant organizations to celebrate the sustainable Alaska wild salmon industry and the health and social benefits Alaska wild salmon provide to the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 262—COMMEMORATING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AIR FORCE AS AN INDEPENDENT MILITARY SERVICE AND CELEBRATING THE AIR FORCE FOR 70 YEARS OF SERVING AND DEFENDING THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. UDALL, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. BURR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 262

Whereas, on August 1, 1907, the Aeronautical Division of the Army Signal Corps, consisting of 1 officer and 2 enlisted men, began operation under the command of Captain Charles DeForest Chandler with the responsibility for “all matters pertaining to military ballooning, air machines, and all kindred subjects”;

Whereas, in 1908, the Department of War contracted with the Wright brothers to build 1 heavier-than-air flying machine for the Army and, in 1909, the Department accepted the Wright Military Flyer, the first military airplane;

Whereas pilots of the United States, flying with both Allied air forces and with the Army Air Service, performed admirably during the course of World War I, the first air war in history, by participating in pursuit, observation, and day and night bombing missions;

Whereas pioneering aviators of the United States, including Mason M. Patrick, William “Billy” Mitchell, Benjamin D. Foulois, Frank M. Andrews, Henry H. “Hap” Arnold, James H. “Jimmy” Doolittle, and Edward “Eddie” Rickenbacker, were among the first individuals to recognize the military potential of airpower and, in the decades following World War I, courageously laid the foundation for the creation of an independent arm for the air forces of the United States;

Whereas, on June 20, 1941, the Department of War created the Army Air Forces as the aviation element of that Department and, shortly thereafter, the Department made the Army Air Forces co-equal to the Army Ground Forces;

Whereas General Henry H. “Hap” Arnold drew upon the industrial prowess and human resources of the United States to transform the Army Air Corps from a force of 22,400 men and 2,402 aircraft in 1939 into an entity with a peak wartime strength of 2,400,000 personnel and 79,908 aircraft;

Whereas the standard for courage, flexibility, and intrepidity in combat was established for all Airmen during the first aerial raid in the Pacific Theater on April 18, 1942, when Lieutenant Colonel James “Jimmy” H.