

Doherty, Tyrone Woods, J. Christopher Stevens, and Sean Smith in recognition of their contributions to the Nation; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. NELSON:

S. 1907. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax relief for disaster areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 1908. A bill to streamline the employer reporting process and strengthen the eligibility verification process for the premium assistance tax credit and cost-sharing subsidy; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 1909. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a system to educate individuals approaching Medicare eligibility, to simplify and modernize the eligibility enrollment process, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 1910. A bill to clarify membership requirements for the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. KAINE, Mr. WARNER, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 1911. A bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer certain funds to the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. REED:

S. 1912. A bill to ensure that irresponsible corporate executives, rather than shareholders, pay fines and penalties; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 279. A resolution reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. THUNE):

S. Res. 280. A resolution designating the week of October 2 through October 6, 2017, as "National Health Information Technology Week" to recognize the value of health information technology in transforming and improving the healthcare system for all people in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 146

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) and the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) were added as cosponsors of S. 146, a bill to strengthen accountability for deployment of border security technology at the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

S. 293

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 293, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the deferral of inclusion in gross income for capital gains reinvested in opportunity zones.

S. 322

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 322, a bill to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from emotional and psychological trauma caused by acts of violence or threats of violence against their pets.

S. 366

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 366, a bill to require the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies to take risk profiles and business models of institutions into account when taking regulatory actions, and for other purposes.

S. 384

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 384, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 482

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 482, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 708

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 708, a bill to improve the ability of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to interdict fentanyl, other synthetic opioids, and other narcotics and psychoactive substances that are illegally imported into the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1002

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1002, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 1042

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1042, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to exclude Segal Americorps Education Awards and related awards from income.

S. 1064

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1064, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to prohibit the stigmatization of children who are unable to pay for meals.

S. 1108

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1108, a bill to amend title 4, United States Code, to provide for the flying of the flag at half-staff in the event of the death of a first responder in the line of duty.

S. 1110

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1110, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide for private lactation areas in the terminals of large and medium hub airports, and for other purposes.

S. 1274

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1274, a bill to direct the President to establish an interagency mechanism to coordinate United States development programs and private sector investment activities, and for other purposes.

S. 1568

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1568, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of President John F. Kennedy.

S. 1589

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1589, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Small Business Act to expand the availability of employee stock ownership plans in S corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 1595

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1595, a bill to amend the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 to impose additional sanctions with respect to Hizballah, and for other purposes.

S. 1766

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1766, a bill to reauthorize the SAFER Act of 2013, and for other purposes.

S. 1769

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri

(Mrs. McCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1769, a bill to require a new or updated Federal website that is intended for use by the public to be mobile friendly, and for other purposes.

S. 1791

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1791, a bill to amend the Act of August 25, 1958, commonly known as the "Former Presidents Act of 1958", with respect to the monetary allowance payable to a former President, and for other purposes.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1827, a bill to extend funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes.

S. 1847

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1847, a bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to ensure that the needs of children are considered in homeland security, trafficking, and disaster recovery planning, and for other purposes.

S. 1867

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1867, a bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to eliminate the sunset of certain provisions relating to information technology, to amend the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 to extend the sunset relating to the Federal Data Center Consolidation Initiative, and for other purposes.

S. 1899

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1899, a bill to reauthorize and extend funding for community health centers and the National Health Service Corps.

S. CON. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 6, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. NELSON:

S. 1907. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax relief for disaster areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I am the Senator from Florida, along with my

colleague MARCO RUBIO. We, of course, have been at the forefront of this terrible tragedy that is going on in Puerto Rico, and I want to comment on that.

By the way, speaking of bipartisanship, there is a good example. Senator RUBIO and I, when our State was hit by Irma, spent 3 days, going around together, showing that we were shoulder to shoulder trying to help Floridians overcome the tragedy that had just befallen them. We dished out food together. We went and surveyed the floods. We went into the poor, little cities. We went and thanked university students who had rescued the elderly, the frail, when they were abandoned. We went all across the State. The day after the storm, we went first into the Keys to see the destruction there. Senator RUBIO and I have been joined at the hip.

When it comes to looking at what is happening in Puerto Rico, it is pretty obvious. Last week, a week had passed since the storm. In fact, the supplies were stacking up, but they were stacking up in the ports. They were not able to get out into the interior of the island. The two of us were pretty strong in our words; that you have to get the most capable organization in to do that when in fact it is almost like combat conditions, and that is the U.S. military.

Finally, Wednesday night of last week, they sent me a three-star general who started to get it organized. Now we are seeing it distributed out, but it is going to take more because it is an island that is just absolutely devastated. It is going to take a long time to recover, and it is going to take a lot more money.

Remember, these are our fellow American citizens. We saw the devastation in Florida. Now the continuing hardship is being tolled in Puerto Rico. It is a population where half are without drinking water, only 5 percent—and this is 2 weeks after the storm—of the electricity grid is restored, and cash is in short supply.

Whereas, in Florida we saw the flooded streets, the downed trees, the crushed cars, the flipped over mobile homes, limited access to critical supplies like gasoline. Property damage was everywhere, and it was the entire State. What we are seeing is—multiply that many fold, and that is what we are seeing in Puerto Rico.

We are working on a supplemental funding bill. Remember that right after the first storm in Texas, we passed a \$15 billion emergency supplemental appropriations bill. That is going to run out within the next few days so we have to have another supplemental funding bill.

As you can imagine, now it is not just Texas and Florida, but it is the Virgin Islands, it is Puerto Rico, and there are some other States as well. We are going to need to help the people cover the cost of recovery, and we are going to need to jump-start the local economy in those areas hardest hit by the storms.

Today I am going to introduce a piece of legislation. I call it the National Disaster Tax Relief Act, which would give people affected by these storms some much needed tax relief. This is in the shadow of the conversations taking place, as we speak, in a hearing—which I have just come from—in the Finance Committee about future reform of the Federal Tax Code.

The bill I am introducing today would do four things: One, it would let businesses and farmers immediately write off their cleanup costs, not just their replacement costs.

For example, the Florida citrus growers in the central part of the State—and it was finally going to be a good news story on our citrus crop—half of the citrus buffeted by the wind is on the ground.

Go further south into Southwest Florida, 75 percent of the citrus is on the ground. What this would do is allow the citrus growers to be able to, in the first year, write off the costs—expenses, in other words—of removing the downed trees, not just the cost of a new tree. That is especially important to citrus growers all over the United States because they are already hurting from a plant disease, a bacteria known as greening, which kills the citrus tree in 5 years.

Therefore, there are a number of these groves that have been abandoned, but it is valuable land. We need to give an incentive to the citrus grower to be able to go in and plow under that citrus growth and replant—the immediate expensing of that plowing under, plus the replanting of what we think are hardier varieties of citrus that are more resistant to this disease, this bacteria called greening. We think that would be a huge incentive to try to save the citrus industry not only in my State but in Texas, Arizona, California. There is citrus also in Louisiana and some in other Southern States.

The second thing the bill does is it gives taxpayers the ability to exempt State and local disaster mitigation payments from Federal taxes, and it lets them save for the next big storm tax-free. That would be in a catastrophe savings account.

It would allow people to save tax-free \$150,000 to cover things not covered by insurance. In Southwest Florida, there are a lot of seawalls that cave in, seawalls that are extremely expensive to rebuild and repair. This tax-free account would allow them to put away savings for that and other kinds of costs of remediation. They go out, and they try to save their home by getting tarps on the roof, making certain repairs until they can get the replacement, and the insurance can pay for it. Expensing of those items in the Tax Code would certainly be that incentive.

The bill also includes extra infrastructure financing for areas damaged by the storms; for example, help for low-income housing needs and other infrastructure needs that are so important to economic recovery.