

criminal and civil law relating to sex trafficking.

S. 1774

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1774, a bill to provide protections for workers with respect to their right to select or refrain from selecting representation by a labor organization.

S. 1914

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1914, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act in order to strengthen rules in case of competition for diabetic testing strips, and for other purposes.

S. 2070

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2070, a bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism.

S. 2105

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2105, a bill to modify the presumption of service connection for veterans who were exposed to herbicide agents while serving in the Armed Forces in Thailand during the Vietnam era, and for other purposes.

S. 2147

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2147, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a Pension Rehabilitation Trust Fund to establish a Pension Rehabilitation Administration within the Department of the Treasury to make loans to multiemployer defined benefit plans, and for other purposes.

S. 2152

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2152, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for assistance for victims of child pornography, and for other purposes.

S. 2236

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2236, a bill to require covered discrimination and covered harassment awareness and prevention training for Members, officers, employees, interns, fellows, and detailees of Congress within 30 days of employment and annually thereafter, to require a biennial climate survey of Congress, to amend the enforcement process under the Office of Congressional Workplace

Rights for covered discrimination and covered harassment complaints, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 362—RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF THE LOS ANGELES-CLASS ATTACK SUBMARINE THE USS JACKSONVILLE AND THE CREW OF THE USS JACKSONVILLE, WHO SERVED THE UNITED STATES WITH VALOR AND BRAVERY

Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. NELSON) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 362

Whereas the USS Jacksonville (SSN 699) is named after Jacksonville, the largest and most populous city in Florida, and is the first ship to bear that name;

Whereas the slogan of the city of Jacksonville, Florida, is "The Bold New City of the South" and inspired the nickname of the USS Jacksonville, which is "The Bold One";

Whereas, on August 10, 2017, the USS Jacksonville returned to the home port of the USS Jacksonville at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in the Western Pacific after 209 days out to sea, thus completing the 15th and final deployment of the USS Jacksonville;

Whereas, on the last deployment of the USS Jacksonville, the USS Jacksonville steamed more than 48,000 nautical miles while conducting—

(1) maritime security operations in the areas of operation of the Fifth Fleet and Seventh Fleet of the United States; and

(2) joint exercises with the Maritime Self-Defense Force of Japan and the navy of the Republic of India;

Whereas, since the commissioning of the USS Jacksonville on May 16, 1981, the USS Jacksonville has completed 2 around-the-world cruises, visited ports on nearly every continent, and completed countless critical missions; and

Whereas, on September 11, 2001, while the USS Jacksonville was attached to the Enterprise Battle Group, the USS Jacksonville—

(1) was in the Mediterranean Sea; and

(2) stayed on-station to provide critical intelligence support as the United States prepared to retaliate in response to the terrorist attacks carried out on that day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes the service of the Los Angeles-class attack submarine the USS Jacksonville and the crew of the USS Jacksonville, who served the United States with valor and bravery.

SENATE RESOLUTION 363—EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONCERN ABOUT THE GROWING POLITICAL, HUMANITARIAN, AND ECONOMIC CRISIS IN VENEZUELA AND THE WIDESPREAD HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES PERPETRATED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA

Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 363

Whereas the crisis in Venezuela continues to ravage the country and the Venezuelan

people suffer from shortages of essential medicines, food, and basic supplies;

Whereas because of the crisis in Venezuela, approximately 1,300,000 people are undernourished and roughly 75 percent of the population has lost an average of 19 pounds since the start of the economic crisis;

Whereas the largest impact of the crisis in Venezuela is felt by children, as 54 percent suffer from nutritional deficiencies, according to the nongovernmental organization Caritas;

Whereas public health organizations in Venezuela report that only 38 percent of essential drugs are present in the country and more than 60 of the hospitals in Venezuela no longer have potable water, leading to a rise in chronic diseases, as well as in communicable diseases such as malaria and diphtheria;

Whereas the crisis forces thousands of Venezuelans to leave the country in vulnerable conditions and the number of Venezuelans seeking asylum in 2017 was almost double that in 2016, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

Whereas President of Venezuela Nicolas Maduro has repeatedly denied the existence of Venezuela's humanitarian crisis and rejected offers of international humanitarian assistance;

Whereas, instead of responding to the needs and demands of its people, the Government of Venezuela has prioritized the consolidation of power, undermined Venezuela's democracy, and engaged in a campaign of repression and human rights abuses;

Whereas the Government of Venezuela curtails freedom of expression, harasses journalists, and limits the ability of the Venezuelan people and the world to learn about the crisis and its effects;

Whereas, starting in April 2017, Venezuelan citizens staged massive, nationwide protests for more than four months in direct opposition to President Maduro's efforts to consolidate power and undermine Venezuela's democracy;

Whereas the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights reports that 124 deaths have been investigated by the Venezuelan Attorney General's Office in connection with the 2017 protests, with at least 46 victims allegedly killed by security forces and 27 more by members of armed pro-government civilian groups, bringing the total number of extrajudicial deaths to 357 between July 2015 and March 2017;

Whereas the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner concluded that there has been widespread and systematic use of excessive force and arbitrary detentions against demonstrators, as well as violent raids of homes, torture, and ill-treatment of those detained in connection with the protests;

Whereas human rights organizations in Venezuela have identified more than 5,000 arbitrary detentions between April 1, 2017, and October 31, 2017, and at least 299 political prisoners currently detained;

Whereas Amnesty International documented repeated use of various methods of arbitrary detention, including torture and forced disappearances intended to silence dissidents and limit freedom of expression;

Whereas nongovernmental organizations Human Rights Watch and Foro Penal have documented how Venezuelan security forces have used tactics of torture, involving electric shocks and asphyxiation, against individuals who oppose the Government of Venezuela;

Whereas the Government of Venezuela continues to use the Bolivarian National Guard and National Police to repress and detain protesters and subsequently try them in military courts with at least 198 documented

cases against civilians in military courts; and

Whereas, on July 25, 2017, the Organization of American States Secretary General Luis Almagro convened public hearings to review whether the Government of Venezuela has committed crimes against humanity and should be referred to the International Criminal Court: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses its profound concern about the humanitarian impacts of the crisis suffered by the people of Venezuela, including widespread shortages of basic food commodities and essential medicines;

(2) urges President of Venezuela Nicolas Maduro to permit the delivery of international humanitarian assistance;

(3) calls on the Government of Venezuela to immediately release all political prisoners and to respect internationally recognized human rights;

(4) calls on the Government of Venezuela to ensure the neutrality and professionalism of all security forces and to respect the Venezuelan people's rights to freedom of expression and assembly;

(5) supports the Secretary General of the Organization of American States in his review of whether the widespread human rights abuses in Venezuela warrant an investigation by the International Criminal Court; and

(6) urges the President of the United States to provide full support for OAS efforts in examining the human rights situation in Venezuela and to instruct appropriate Federal agencies to hold officials of the Government of Venezuela accountable for violations of United States law and abuses of internationally recognized human rights.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator CHARLES E. GRASSLEY, intend to object to proceeding to the nomination of David J. Ryder, of New Jersey, to be Director of the Mint, and Isabel Marie Keenan Patelunas, of Pennsylvania, to be Assistant Secretary of Intelligence and Analysis, Department of the Treasury, dated December 20, 2017.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I have a request for one committee to meet during today's session of the Senate. It has the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 20, 2017, at 10:30 a.m. in room SD-406 to conduct a hearing entitled "Freight Movement: Assessing Where We Are Now and Where We Need to Go".

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 489, 498, 509, 531, and 532; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Bruce D. Jette, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army; James E. McPherson, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Army; Randall G. Schriver, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense; Thomas Harker, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy; and John P. Roth, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 571, 572, 573, 574, and 575.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Duane A. Kees, of Arkansas, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Arkansas for the term of four years; Stephen R. McAllister, of Kansas, to be United States Attorney for the District of Kansas for the term of four years; Ronald A. Parsons, Jr., of South Dakota, to be United States Attorney for the District of South Dakota for the term of four years; Ryan K. Patrick, of Texas, to be United States Attorney for the Southern District of Texas for the term of four years; and Michael B. Stuart, of West Virginia, to be United States Attorney for the Southern District of West Virginia for the term of four years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc

with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kees, McAllister, Parsons, Patrick, and Stuart nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, on January 3, 2018, the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 508. I ask consent that there be 30 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form; that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD. I further ask that notwithstanding rule XXXI, the nomination be held in status quo into the second session of the 115th Congress.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar Nos. 560 through 569 and all nominations placed on the Secretary's desk; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Anthony J. Cotton