

and dangerous, even though placement in foster care is based on the actions of a parent or guardian, not the child;

Whereas recent studies show foster children enrolled in Medicaid were prescribed antipsychotic medications at 3 to 9 times the rate of other children receiving Medicaid;

Whereas due to heavy caseloads and limited resources, the average tenure for a worker in child protection services is just 3 years;

Whereas States, localities, and communities should be encouraged to invest resources in preventative and reunification services and postpermanency programs to ensure that more children in foster care are provided with safe, loving, and permanent placements;

Whereas in 2018, Congress passed the Family First Prevention Services Act, which provided new investments in prevention and family reunification services to help more families stay together and ensure more children are in safe, loving, and permanent homes;

Whereas Federal legislation over the past 3 decades, including the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-272), the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105-89), the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-351), the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (Public Law 112-34), and the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (Public Law 113-183) provided new investments and services to improve the outcomes of children in the foster-care system;

Whereas May 2018 is an appropriate month to designate as National Foster Care Month to provide an opportunity to acknowledge the accomplishments of the child-welfare workforce, foster parents, advocacy community, and mentors for their dedication, accomplishments, and positive impact they have on the lives of children; and

Whereas much remains to be done to ensure that all children have a safe, loving, nurturing, and permanent family, regardless of age or special needs: Now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of National Foster Care Month;

(2) recognizes National Foster Care Month as an opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges that children face in the foster-care system;

(3) encourages Congress to implement policy to improve the lives of children in the foster-care system;

(4) acknowledges the unique needs of children in the foster-care system;

(5) recognizes foster youth throughout the United States for their ongoing tenacity, courage, and resilience while facing life challenges;

(6) acknowledges the exceptional alumni of the foster-care system who serve as advocates and role models for youth who remain in care;

(7) honors the commitment and dedication of the individuals who work tirelessly to provide assistance and services to children in the foster-care system;

(8) supports the designation of May 31, 2018 as National Foster Parent Appreciation Day;

(9) recognizes National Foster Parent Appreciation Day as an opportunity to recognize the efforts of foster parents to provide safe and loving care for children in need and raise awareness about the increasing need for foster parents to serve in their communities; and

(10) reaffirms the need to continue working to improve the outcomes of all children in the foster-care system through parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act (42

U.S.C. 601 et seq.) and other programs designed to—

(A) support vulnerable families;

(B) invest in prevention and reunification services;

(C) promote adoption in cases where reunification is not in the best interests of the child;

(D) adequately serve those children brought into the foster-care system; and

(E) facilitate the successful transition into adulthood for children that “age out” of the foster-care system.

SENATE RESOLUTION 514—CONGRATULATING THE STUDENTS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND LEADERS OF CHARTER SCHOOLS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES FOR MAKING ONGOING CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION, AND SUPPORTING THE IDEALS AND GOALS OF THE 19TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK, CELEBRATED MAY 7 THROUGH MAY 11, 2018

Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BURR, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. TILLIS, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. COONS, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 514

Whereas charter schools are public schools that do not charge tuition and enroll any student who wants to attend, often through a random lottery when the demand for enrollment is outmatched by the supply of available charter school seats;

Whereas high-performing public charter schools deliver a high-quality public education and challenge all students to reach the students' potential for academic success;

Whereas high-performing public charter schools promote innovation and excellence in public education;

Whereas public charter schools throughout the United States provide millions of families with diverse and innovative educational options for children of the families;

Whereas high-performing public charter schools and charter management organizations are increasing student achievement and attendance rates at institutions of higher education;

Whereas public charter schools are authorized by a designated entity and—

(1) respond to the needs of communities, families, and students in the United States; and

(2) promote the principles of quality, accountability, choice, high-performance, and innovation;

Whereas, in exchange for flexibility and autonomy, public charter schools are held accountable by the authorizers of the charter schools for improving student achievement and for sound financial and operational management;

Whereas public charter schools are required to meet the student achievement accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) in the same manner as traditional public schools;

Whereas public charter schools often set higher expectations for students, beyond the

requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.), to ensure that the charter schools are of high quality and truly accountable to the public;

Whereas 44 States and the District of Columbia have enacted laws authorizing public charter schools;

Whereas, as of the 2017–2018 school year, more than 7,000 public charter schools served nearly 3,200,000 children;

Whereas enrollment in public charter schools grew from 400,000 students in 2001 to 3,200,000 students in 2018, an eightfold increase in 17 years;

Whereas in the United States—

(1) in 208 school districts, more than 10 percent of public school students are enrolled in public charter schools; and

(2) in 19 school districts, at least 30 percent of public school students are enrolled in public charter schools;

Whereas high-performing public charter schools improve the academic achievement of students enrolled in the charter schools and collaborate with traditional public schools to improve public education for all students;

Whereas public charter schools—

(1) give parents the freedom to choose public schools;

(2) routinely measure parental satisfaction levels; and

(3) must prove the ongoing success of the charter schools to parents, policymakers, and the communities served by the charter schools or risk closure;

Whereas a 2015 report from the Center for Research on Education Outcomes at Stanford University found significant improvements for students at urban charter schools, and compared to peers of traditional public schools, each year those students completed the equivalent of 28 more days of learning in reading and 40 more days of learning in math;

Whereas parental demand for high-performing charter schools is high, and there was an estimated 5 percent growth in charter school enrollment between fall 2016 and fall 2017; and

Whereas the 19th annual National Charter Schools Week is celebrated the week of May 7 through May 11, 2018: Now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the students, families, teachers, leaders, and staff of public charter schools across the United States for—

(A) making ongoing contributions to public education;

(B) making impressive strides in closing the academic achievement gap in schools in the United States, particularly in schools with some of the most disadvantaged students in both rural and urban communities; and

(C) improving and strengthening the public school system throughout the United States;

(2) supports the ideals and goals of the 19th annual National Charter Schools Week, a week-long celebration held May 7 through May 11, 2018, in communities throughout the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to hold appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities for National Charter Schools Week to demonstrate support for public charter schools.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2243. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 36, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year

2019 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2020 through 2028; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2244. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. TILLIS) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2772, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for requirements relating to the reassignment of Department of Veterans Affairs senior executive employees.

SA 2245. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. PETERS)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 3249, to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2243. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 36, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2019 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2020 through 2028; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ SENSE OF THE SENATE ON PAY FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS IF THE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS ARE NOT COMPLETED IN A TIMELY MANNER.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) both Houses of Congress should approve a concurrent resolution on the budget and all the regular appropriations bills before October 1 of each fiscal year;

(2) if a concurrent resolution on the budget and all the regular appropriations bills are not approved by October 1 of each fiscal year, no funds should be appropriated or otherwise be made available from the Treasury of the United States for the pay of any Member of Congress during any period after October 1 that a concurrent resolution on the budget and all the regular appropriations bills are not completed; and

(3) no retroactive pay should be provided to any Member of Congress for any period for which pay is not made available as described in paragraph (2).

SA 2244. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. TILLIS) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2772, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for requirements relating to the reassignment of Department of Veterans Affairs senior executive employees; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Department of Veterans Affairs Senior Executive Accountability Act of 2018” or the “SEA Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. SEMIANNUAL REPORTS ON REASSIGNMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SENIOR EXECUTIVE EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 727. Reassignment of senior executives

“(a) APPROVAL OF REASSIGNMENTS.—No individual employed in a senior executive position at the Department may be reassigned to another such position at the Department unless such reassignment is approved in writing and signed by the Secretary.

“(b) SEMIANNUAL REPORTS REQUIRED.—(1) Not later than June 30 and December 31 of

each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the reassignment of individuals employed in senior executive positions at the Department to other such positions at the Department during the period covered by the report.

“(2) Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall describe the purpose of each reassignment and the costs associated with such reassignment.

“(3) For purposes of paragraph (2), costs associated with a reassignment may only include the following:

“(A) A salary increase.

“(B) Temporary travel expenses for the individual or the family of the individual.

“(C) Moving expenses.

“(D) A paid incentive.

“(c) SENIOR EXECUTIVE POSITION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘senior executive position’ has the meaning given such term in section 713(d) of this title.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 725 the following new item:

“727. Reassignment of senior executives.”

SA 2245. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. PETERS)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 3249, to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this Act—

(1) the term “firearms offenses” means an offense under section 922 or 924 of title 18, United States Code;

(2) the term “Program” means the Project Safe Neighborhoods Block Grant Program established under section 3; and

(3) the term “transnational organized crime group” has the meaning given such term in section 36(k)(6) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2708(k)(6)).

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.

The Attorney General of the United States is authorized to establish and carry out a program, to be known as the “Project Safe Neighborhoods Block Grant Program” within the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice.

SEC. 4. PURPOSE.

(a) PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.—The purpose of the Program is to foster and improve existing partnerships between Federal, State, and local agencies, including the United States Attorney in each Federal judicial district, entities representing members of the community affected by increased violence, victims’ advocates, and researchers to create safer neighborhoods through sustained reductions in violent crimes by—

(1) developing and executing comprehensive strategic plans to reduce violent crimes, including the enforcement of gun laws, and prioritizing efforts focused on identified subsets of individuals or organizations responsible for increasing violence in a particular geographic area;

(2) developing evidence-based and data-driven intervention and prevention initiatives, including juvenile justice projects and activities which may include street-level outreach, conflict mediation, provision of treatment and social services, and the changing of community norms, in order to reduce violence; and

(3) collecting data on outcomes achieved through the Program, including the effect on the violent crime rate, incarceration rate, and recidivism rate of the jurisdiction.

(b) ADDITIONAL PURPOSE AREAS.—In addition to the purpose described in subsection (a), the Attorney General may use funds authorized under this Act for any of the following purposes—

(1) competitive and evidence-based programs to reduce gun crime and gang violence;

(2) the Edward Byrne criminal justice innovation program;

(3) community-based violence prevention initiatives; or

(4) gang and youth violence education, prevention and intervention, and related activities.

SEC. 5. RULES AND REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall issue guidance to create, carry out, and administer the Program in accordance with this section.

(b) FUNDS TO BE DIRECTED TO LOCAL CONTROL.—Amounts made available as grants under the Program shall be, to the greatest extent practicable, locally controlled to address problems that are identified locally.

(c) TASK FORCES.—Thirty percent of the amounts made available as grants under the Program each fiscal year shall be granted to Gang Task Forces in regions experiencing a significant or increased presence of criminal or transnational organizations engaging in high levels of violent crime, firearms offenses, human trafficking, and drug trafficking.

(d) PRIORITY.—Amounts made available as grants under the Program shall be used to prioritize the investigation and prosecution of individuals who have an aggravating or leadership role in a criminal or transnational organization described in subsection (c).

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General to carry out the Program \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2021.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I have 10 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 COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 16, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Joseph Ryan Gruters, of Florida, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors, Jennifer L. Homendy, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board, and Heidi R. King, of California, to be Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation.