

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on China and Russia.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Exploring the cryptocurrency and blockchain ecosystem."

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: John Mark Pommersheim, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan, William H. Moser, of North Carolina, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Donald Armin Blome, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Tunisia, all of the Department of State.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a business meeting and hearing on the following nominations: Jonathan A. Kobes, of South Dakota, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit, Kenneth D. Bell, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of North Carolina, Stephanie A. Gallagher, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland, Mary S. McElroy, to be United States District Judge for the District of Rhode Island, Carl J. Nichols, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, John M. O'Connor, to be United States District Judge for the Northern, Eastern and Western Districts of Oklahoma, and Martha Maria Pacold, Mary M. Rowland, and Steven C. Seeger, each to be a United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 11, 2018, during the first vote, to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 2 p.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OCEANS, ATMOSPHERE, FISHERIES, AND COAST GUARD

The Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard

of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

NOTICE: REGISTRATION OF MASS MAILINGS

The filing date for the 2018 third quarter Mass Mailing report is Thursday, October 25, 2018. An electronic option is available on Webster that will allow forms to be submitted via a fillable pdf document. If your office did no mass mailings during this period, please submit a form that states "none."

Mass mailing registrations or negative reports can be submitted electronically or delivered to the Senate Office of Public Records, 232 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510-7116.

The Senate Office of Public Records is open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. when the Senate is not in session). For further information, please contact the Senate Office of Public Records at (202) 224-0322.

AUTHORIZING THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES MEMORIAL FOUNDATION TO ESTABLISH A COMMEMORATIVE WORK IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND ITS ENVIRONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 523, H.R. 1037.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1037) to authorize the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion 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 bill (H.R. 1037) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE LAND EXCHANGE ACT OF 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 376, H.R. 2615.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2615) to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service

and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for other purposes.

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Gulf Islands National Seashore Land Exchange Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **FEDERAL LAND.**—The term "Federal land" means the parcel of approximately 1.542 acres of land that is located within the Gulf Islands National Seashore in Jackson County, Mississippi, and identified as "NPS Exchange Area" on the Map.

(2) **MAP.**—The term "Map" means the map entitled "Gulf Islands National Seashore, Proposed Land Exchange with VFW, Davis Bayou Area—Jackson County, MS", numbered 635/133309, and dated June 2016.

(3) **NON-FEDERAL LAND.**—The term "non-Federal land" means the parcel of approximately 2.161 acres of land that is located in Jackson County, Mississippi, and identified as "VFW Exchange Area" on the Map.

(4) **POST.**—The term "Post" means the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5699.

(5) **SECRETARY.**—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service.

SEC. 3. GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE LAND EXCHANGE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may convey to the Post all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Federal land in exchange for the conveyance by the Post to the Secretary of all right, title, and interest of the Post in and to the non-Federal land.

(b) **EQUAL VALUE EXCHANGE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The values of the Federal land and non-Federal land to be exchanged under this section shall be equal, as determined by an appraisal conducted—

(A) by a qualified and independent appraiser; and

(B) in accordance with nationally recognized appraisal standards.

(2) **EQUALIZATION.**—If the values of the Federal land and non-Federal land to be exchanged under this section are not equal, the values shall be equalized through—

(A) a cash payment; or

(B) adjustments to the acreage of the Federal land or non-Federal land to be exchanged, as applicable.

(c) **PAYMENT OF COSTS OF CONVEYANCE.**—

(1) **PAYMENT REQUIRED.**—As a condition of the exchange authorized under this section, the Secretary shall require the Post to pay the costs to be incurred by the Secretary, or to reimburse the Secretary for the costs incurred by the Secretary, to carry out the exchange, including—

(A) survey costs;

(B) any costs relating to environmental documentation; and

(C) any other administrative costs relating to the land exchange.

(2) **REFUND.**—If the Secretary collects amounts from the Post under paragraph (1) before the Secretary incurs the actual costs and the amount collected by the Secretary exceeds the costs actually incurred by the Secretary to carry out the land exchange under this section, the Secretary shall provide to the Post a refund of the excess amount paid by the Post.

(3) **TREATMENT OF CERTAIN AMOUNTS RECEIVED.**—Amounts received by the Secretary from the Post as reimbursement for costs incurred under paragraph (1) shall be—

(A) credited to the fund or account from which amounts were used to pay the costs incurred by the Secretary in carrying out the land exchange;

(B) merged with amounts in the fund or account to which the amounts were credited under subparagraph (A); and

(C) available for the same purposes as, and subject to the same conditions and limitations applicable to, amounts in the fund or account to which the amounts were credited under subparagraph (A).

(d) **DESCRIPTION OF FEDERAL LAND AND NON-FEDERAL LAND.**—The exact acreage and legal description of the Federal land and non-Federal land to be exchanged under this section shall be determined by surveys that are determined to be satisfactory by the Secretary and the Post.

(e) **CONVEYANCE AGREEMENT.**—The exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land under this section shall be—

(1) carried out through a quitclaim deed or other legal instrument; and

(2) subject to such terms and conditions as are mutually satisfactory to the Secretary and the Post, including such additional terms and conditions as the Secretary considers to be appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(f) **VALID EXISTING RIGHTS.**—The exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land authorized under this section shall be subject to valid existing rights.

(g) **TITLE APPROVAL.**—Title to the Federal land and non-Federal land to be exchanged under this section shall be in a form acceptable to the Secretary.

(h) **TREATMENT OF ACQUIRED LAND.**—Any non-Federal land and interests in non-Federal land acquired by the United States under this section shall be administered by the Secretary as part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

(i) **MODIFICATION OF BOUNDARY.**—On completion of the exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land under this section, the Secretary shall modify the boundary of the Gulf Islands National Seashore to reflect the exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to and the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

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

The bill was read the third time.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 2615), as amended, was passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

STUDY OF UNDERREPRESENTED CLASSES CHASING ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE SUCCESS ACT OF 2018

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

ation of H.R. 6758, which was received from the House.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6758) to direct the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, in consultation with the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to study and provide recommendations to promote the participation of women, minorities, and veterans in entrepreneurship activities and the patent system, to extend by 8 years the Patent and Trademark Office's authority to set the amounts for the fees it charges, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. 6758) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

IRAQ AND SYRIA GENOCIDE EMERGENCY RELIEF AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 227, H.R. 390.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 390) to provide emergency relief for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Iraq and Syria, for accountability for perpetrators of these crimes, and for other purposes.

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

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act of 2017”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings; sense of Congress.

Sec. 3. Sense of Congress on the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis in Syria.

Sec. 4. Definitions.

Sec. 5. Statement of policy.

Sec. 6. Actions to promote accountability in Iraq and Syria for acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

Sec. 7. Identification of and assistance to address humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of certain persons in Iraq and Syria.

Sec. 8. Reports.

Sec. 9. Technical assistance authorized.

Sec. 10. Department of State Rewards for Justice Program.

Sec. 11. Syria Study Group.

Sec. 12. Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic.

Sec. 13. Prohibition on additional funding.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) Religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria are persecuted groups. The Secretary of State of State declared on March 17, 2016, and August 15, 2017, that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), is responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and other atrocity crimes against several of these groups, including Christians and Yazidis.

(2) The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic stated in its February 3, 2016, report, “The Government has committed the crimes against humanity of extermination, murder, rape or other forms of sexual violence, torture, imprisonment, enforced disappearance and other inhuman acts. Based on the same conduct, war crimes have also been committed. Both Jabhat Al-Nusra and some anti-Government armed groups have committed the war crimes of murder, cruel treatment, and torture.”

(3) The International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program and the Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training of the Department of Justice have provided technical assistance to governmental judicial and law enforcement entities in Iraq, including with funding support from the Department of State.

(4) According to the Department of State's annual reports on international religious freedom—

(A) the number of Christians living in Iraq has dropped from an estimated 800,000 to 1,400,000 in 2002 to fewer than 250,000 in 2016; and

(B) the number of Yazidis living in Iraq has dropped from 500,000 in 2013 to between 350,000 and 400,000 in 2016.

(5) The annual reports on international religious freedom also suggest that—

(A) Christian communities living in Syria, which had accounted for between 8 and 10 percent of Syria's total population in 2010, are now considerably smaller as a result of the civil war; and

(B) the population of approximately 80,000 Yazidis in 2010 may now be larger because of refugees from Iraq.

(6) On December 21, 2016, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution to establish the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Those Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

(7) Local communities and entities have sought to mitigate the impact of violence directed against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria, including the Chaldean Catholic Archdiocese of Erbil (Kurdistan Region of Iraq), which has used private funds to provide assistance to internally displaced Christians, Yazidis, and Muslims throughout the greater Erbil region, while growing needs and diminishing resources have made it increasingly difficult to continue these efforts.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—Congress—

(1) strongly condemns—

(A) the ongoing violence, the use of chemical weapons, targeting of civilian populations with barrel, incendiary, and cluster bombs and SCUD missiles, and the systematic gross human rights violations carried out by the Government of Syria and pro-government forces under the direction of President Bashar al-Assad; and

(B) all abuses committed by violent extremist groups and other combatants involved in the civil war in Syria;

(2) expresses its support for the people of Syria seeking democratic change;