

the participants in those interactions to listen, concur, question, and dissent with reason and compassion;

Whereas students who participate in speech and debate have chosen a challenging activity that requires regular practice, dedication, and hard work;

Whereas teachers and coaches of speech and debate devote in-school, afterschool, and weekend hours to equip students with life-changing skills and opportunities;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day emphasizes the lifelong impact of providing people of the United States with the confidence and preparation to both discern and share views;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day acknowledges that most achievements, celebrations, commemorations, and pivotal moments in modern history begin, end, or are crystallized with public address;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day recognizes that learning to research, construct, and present an argument is integral to personal advocacy, social movements, and the making of public policy;

Whereas the National Speech & Debate Association, in conjunction with national and local partners, honors and celebrates the importance of speech and debate through National Speech and Debate Education Day; and

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day emphasizes the importance of speech and debate education and the integration of speech and debate education across grade levels and disciplines: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 1, 2019, as “National Speech and Debate Education Day”;

(2) strongly affirms the purposes of National Speech and Debate Education Day; and

(3) encourages educational institutions, businesses, community and civic associations, and all people of the United States to celebrate and promote National Speech and Debate Education Day.

SENATE RESOLUTION 77—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 16 THROUGH 23, 2019, AS “NATIONAL FFA WEEK,” RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION IN DEVELOPING YOUNG LEADERS, AND CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF FEMALE MEMBERSHIP IN THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. KING, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. JONES, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ENZI, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. ROMNEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 77

Whereas Future Farmers of America (FFA) was established in 1928 and is now known as the National FFA Organization;

Whereas the National FFA Organization is comprised of more than 8,500 chapters in all 50 States, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and Washington, D.C.;

Whereas more than 650,000 students in secondary schools, community and technical colleges, and universities are members of the National FFA Organization;

Whereas 2019 marks 50 years of female membership in the National FFA Organization;

Whereas the National FFA Organization welcomes students with diverse backgrounds;

Whereas the mission of the National FFA Organization is to develop the potential of students for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education;

Whereas, through classroom education and hands-on work experience, the National FFA Organization prepares students for college and a broad range of careers, including more than 255 careers in agriculture;

Whereas members of the National FFA Organization strengthen their communities through service and by preparing the next generation of leaders to meet agricultural challenges; and

Whereas members of the National FFA Organization will celebrate National FFA Week during the week of February 16 through 23, 2019: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 16 through 23, 2019, as “National FFA Week”;

(2) recognizes the important role of the National FFA Organization in developing young leaders and providing educational and career opportunities to students; and

(3) celebrates 50 years of female membership in the National FFA Organization.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 4—PROVIDING FOR A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF H.J. RES. 31

Mr. SHELBY submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 4

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That, in the enrollment of the joint resolution H.J. Res. 31, the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall amend the long title so as to read: “Making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.”.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 5—SUPPORTING THE LOCAL RADIO FREEDOM ACT

Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. UDALL) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. CON. RES. 5

Whereas the United States enjoys broadcasting and sound recording industries that are the envy of the world due to the symbiotic relationship that has existed among these industries for many decades;

Whereas, for nearly a century, Congress has rejected repeated calls by the recording industry to impose a performance fee on local radio stations for simply playing music on the radio, as such a fee would upset the mutually beneficial relationship between local radio and the recording industry;

Whereas local radio stations provide free publicity and promotion to the recording industry and performers of music in the form of radio airplay, interviews with performers, introduction of new performers, concert promotions, and publicity that promotes the sale of music, concert tickets, ring tones, music videos, and associated merchandise;

Whereas committees in the Senate and the House of Representatives have previously reported that “the sale of many sound recordings and the careers of many performers have benefitted considerably from airplay and other promotional activities provided by both noncommercial and advertiser-supported, free over-the-air broadcasting”;

Whereas local radio broadcasters provide tens of thousands of hours of essential local news and weather information during times of national emergencies and natural disasters, as well as public affairs programming, sports, and hundreds of millions of dollars worth of time for public service announcements and local fund raising efforts for worthy charitable causes, all of which are jeopardized if local radio stations are forced to divert revenues to pay for a new performance fee;

Whereas there are many thousands of local radio stations that will suffer severe economic hardship if any new performance fee is imposed, as will many other small businesses that play music, including bars, restaurants, retail establishments, sports and other entertainment venues, shopping centers, and transportation facilities; and

Whereas the hardship that would result from a new performance fee would hurt businesses in the United States and ultimately the consumers in the United States who rely on local radio for news, weather, and entertainment, and such a performance fee is not justified when the current system has produced the most prolific and innovative broadcasting, music, and sound recording industries in the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress should not impose any new performance fee, tax, royalty, or other charge—

(1) relating to the public performance of sound recordings on a local radio station for broadcasting sound recordings over the air; or

(2) on any business for the public performance of sound recordings on a local radio station broadcast over the air.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 190. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RISCH)) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 1, calling for credible, transparent, and safe elections in Nigeria, and for other purposes.

SA 191. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RISCH)) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 1, *supra*.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 190. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RISCH)) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 1, calling for credible, transparent, and safe elections in Nigeria, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following: “That Congress—

(1) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to supporting peace and democracy in Nigeria;

(2) calls on the Government of Nigeria and all Nigerian political parties and actors to—

(A) take actions to facilitate credible, transparent, and peaceful elections that reflect the will of the people and advance the consolidation of democracy and the stability of the broader region;

(B) condemn in the strongest terms the use of speech that incites violence, and refrain from efforts to demonize or delegitimize opponents, sow division among Nigerians, or otherwise inflame tensions;

(C) seek to resolve any disputes over results peacefully, including through judicial processes as necessary;

(D) respect the impartiality of the Independent National Electoral Commission; and

(E) take measures to combat vote buying;

(3) calls on the Government of Nigeria to—

(A) refrain from deploying security forces in a partisan manner;

(B) ensure that security services maintain the highest level of professionalism and impartiality in facilitating the electoral process, enable accredited observers and journalists to perform their work, and protect the right of citizens to exercise their votes freely; and

(C) enforce laws against election malfeasance, including vote buying, and ensure equal and robust application of such laws through appropriate mechanisms, including through the establishment of an Electoral Offenses Commission and Tribunal;

(4) urges all Nigerians to fully and peacefully engage in the electoral process, insist on full enfranchisement, reject inflammatory or divisive rhetoric or actions, and seek to resolve any disputes over results through the legal system;

(5) calls upon the Independent National Electoral Commission to sustain confidence and trust in its management of the electoral process by taking effective measures to—

(A) combat vote buying through voter education campaigns;

(B) institute a nationwide ban on cell phones in the voting cubicle;

(C) ensure the participation in the election of internally displaced persons (IDPs); and

(D) clean the voter rolls and ensure timely production and distribution of the Permanent Voter Card to new voters;

(6) encourages political parties in Nigeria to adhere to and enforce existing codes of conduct that commit parties to democratic electoral standards regarding campaign use of resources, engagement of voters, peaceful resolution of disputes, and acceptance of verified and credible results;

(7) condemns any efforts on the part of any politicians or political parties in Nigeria to politicize the security and law enforcement agencies;

(8) encourages civil society organizations in Nigeria to—

(A) promote the peaceful participation of citizens in the electoral process and draw on existing inter-religious and peacebuilding bodies to enhance their efforts;

(B) disseminate information about citizen-based observation findings and analysis to increase public knowledge and understanding about the conduct of the elections; and

(C) continue leading important early warning and response activities to mitigate election-related violence, including monitoring efforts to incite violence or further inflame tensions;

(9) supports efforts by the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to assist elections preparations in Nigeria, including through programs focused on conflict mitigation; and

(10) calls on the United States Government and other international partners, especially

election-focused nongovernmental organizations, to—

(A) continue to support efforts by the Government of Nigeria to address the remaining electoral preparation challenges and identify gaps in which additional resources or diplomatic engagement could make important contributions to the conduct of credible, transparent elections; and

(B) support civil society organizations and media organizations working to enhance transparency and accountability in the use of state resources around the election period.

SA 191. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RISCH)) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 1, calling for credible, transparent, and safe elections in Nigeria, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas it is in the national interest of the United States to maintain a strong bilateral relationship with a politically stable, democratic, and economically sound Nigeria that can play a leadership role in the region and the continent more broadly;

Whereas Nigeria has presidential and National Assembly elections scheduled for February 16, 2019, and gubernatorial and state-level elections scheduled for March 2, 2019;

Whereas credible, transparent, and peaceful elections could further consolidate democratic gains achieved in Nigeria since the transition from military to civilian democratic rule;

Whereas a 2017 survey conducted by Afrobarometer found that the overwhelming majority of Nigerians agreed that democratic elections are the best means of choosing their country's leaders, thus indicating that the country's citizens are deeply committed to democracy;

Whereas collaboration between civil society actors and the international community was a key factor that contributed to successful elections in 2015;

Whereas successive elections in Nigeria have featured varying degrees of violence;

Whereas both the ruling coalition and opposition parties have incited ethnic violence in an apparent effort to gain electoral advantage, intimidate electoral rivals, and suppress voter turnout;

Whereas, during the Ekiti and Osun gubernatorial elections in July 2018 and September 2018, respectively, there were concerning incidents in which some elements of Nigeria's security agencies displayed partisanship and a lack of objectivity, which risks escalating tensions within the country;

Whereas Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has taken important steps to improve electoral processes, notably through the introduction of continuous voter registration, the adoption of simultaneous accreditation and voting, improvements to the secrecy of the ballot, and the advancement of smart card reader technology;

Whereas remaining challenges to the conduct of credible, transparent, and peaceful elections in Nigeria include the failure to enact additional, critical reforms to the legal framework for elections, instances of vote buying, reported security threats in the Middle Belt and North East, incitement, and disinformation; and

Whereas ensuring transparency in electoral preparations and building public confidence in the electoral process is vital to the success of the upcoming elections in Nigeria: Now, therefore, be it

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I have 4 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 ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 14, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

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, February 14, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Bimal Patel, of Georgia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, Todd M. Harper, of Virginia, and Rodney Hood, of North Carolina, both to be a Member of the National Credit Union Administration Board, and Mark Anthony Calabria, of Virginia, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 14, 2019, at 10 a.m., 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, February 14, 2019, at 2 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the senior Senator from Nebraska and the senior Senator from Arkansas be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions on February 15.

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

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 75, S. Res. 76, and S. Res. 77.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measures en bloc?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the