

on the contributions of the system of government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

S. RES. 274

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 274, a resolution expressing solidarity with Falun Gong practitioners who have lost lives, freedoms, and other rights for adhering to their beliefs and practices, and condemning the practice of non-consenting organ harvesting, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 274

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 277, a resolution remembering the 25th Anniversary of the bombing of the Argentine Israeli Mutual Association (AMIA) Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and recommitting to efforts to uphold justice for the 85 victims of the attacks.

S. RES. 285

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 285, a resolution designating September 2019 as “School Bus Safety Month”.

S. RES. 289

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 289, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that socialism poses a significant threat to freedom, liberty, and economic prosperity.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2349. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to eliminate the common carrier exemption for telecommunications companies; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the introduction of the Protection from Robocalling Act of 2019. This bill would address the problem of illegal robocalls and spam calls. I thank Senators KLOBUCHAR and BLUMENTHAL for cosponsoring this legislation.

Last year, I introduced this legislation to address the nuisance of illegal robocalling.

Since then, these calls have become even more prevalent. For example, last month alone, an estimated 4.7 billion robocalls were placed in the United States—nearly one billion more than the year prior. That amounts to 153 million calls per day, or nearly 2,000 robocalls placed each second. Some of these calls are organized scams.

In one case, one robocall company called people offering to help lower

their credit card interest rates. Instead, it tricked them into giving up sensitive personal information, including their Social Security numbers.

Another company dialed millions of phone numbers on the Do Not Call registry trying to find new customers for a third-party service, contacting a single number more than 1,000 times in the same year. Robocall companies are also engaged in credit card and loan scams.

What's worse, robocalling is now endangering the health and safety of Americans by tying up emergency service lines. Tufts Medical Center in Boston received more than 4,500 illegal robocalls in the span of two hours last April. Each time the medical staff had to answer one of those robocalls could have been an instance when someone who needed life-saving help was unable to get through to a medical professional.

One reason the problem is increasing is because the cost of making and deploying these calls is decreasing. Advances in software make it possible for one person to send out thousands of identical prerecorded messages every second, more quickly and more cheaply than employing scores of human telemarketing agents.

In addition, technology is making it even easier for illegal robocallers to hide their true identity and location. Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology enables robocallers to launch their call campaigns from anywhere in the world. And new technology allows illegal robocallers to disguise where they are actually calling from. This technique, known as “spoofing,” tricks consumers into thinking they are receiving a local call.

The Federal Trade Commission now receives nearly 10,000 robocall complaints every day. With its broad consumer protection authority, the Commission plays a critical role in stopping illegal robocalling. But due to an historic exemption, the Commission has no enforcement authority over telecoms.

When the FTC Act was enacted in 1914, this exemption was put in place because telecoms were monopolies and subject to heavy regulation so FTC enforcement was not needed. In the decades that followed, that regulatory oversight was rolled back, while the exemption remained in place. This created an uneven playing field. A set of federal rules and regulations protecting consumers applied to most industries, but not all.

We must give the Commission the authority they need to pursue complete relief for American consumers. The Protection from Robocalling Act of 2019 removes telecoms from the common carrier exemption in the law. By eliminating this special exemption, telecoms will now have to abide by the same consumer protection standards in areas such as privacy and advertising that apply to other sectors already subject to the FTC's jurisdiction.

It's a matter of fairness, as well as common sense. There's no reason that consumer data held by a broadband service should have more protection under the law than the same data held by their wireless service.

Robocalls are a problem for everyone with a cell phone. It is a problem that is only going to get worse. And we can't expect our law enforcement agencies to keep up with today's technologies if their hands are tied.

We need to be smarter about how we approach this problem. Going after the robocallers and installing call blocking technology on phones is fine; but we need to strike at the systems that they use to perpetrate their scams if we want to see a real difference.

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this legislation that will help consumers fight back against illegal robocalling.

I yield the floor.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 2360. A bill to establish an Office of Emerging Markets within the Small Business Administration that will strengthen the development of small business concerns in emerging markets, including those owned by women, minorities, veterans, and those located in rural areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Unlocking Opportunities in Emerging Markets Act, which establishes an Office of Emerging Markets (OEM) within the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Office of Capital Access to ensure that SBA's access to capital initiatives address the specific needs of entrepreneurs in underserved domestic emerging markets.

Capital is the lifeblood of small businesses, but for women, minorities, veterans and other underserved entrepreneurs, access to capital remains the key roadblock to owning and operating a successful business.

The challenges that underserved entrepreneurs face are historic and pervasive with minority and women entrepreneurs, for example, having less wealth from which to fund new businesses.

Black families have \$17,150 in wealth and Hispanic families have \$20,720 in wealth, while White families have \$171,000 in wealth. Similarly, women have \$3 in wealth for every \$10 men have.

These historical barriers are compounded by systemic inequality in the capital markets. Minority-owned business are two to three times more likely to be denied credit; more likely to avoid applying for loans, based on the belief that they will be turned down; and more likely to receive smaller loans and pay higher interest rates on the loans that they do receive. Rural businesses owners often face an uphill battle to secure funding for their startups. And women are significantly

less likely than men to be approved for a business loan and are more likely to experience funding gaps.

SBA was created to solve these very problems, but instead of being a solution, lending patterns in the agency's largest loan programs mirror these trends. During Fiscal Year 2018, only 4.5 percent of all loans approved by SBA's highest volume loan program—7(a)—went to Black entrepreneurs. Another 8.5 percent went to Hispanic entrepreneurs, while 59 percent went to white borrowers.

Despite these challenges, SBA does not have the coordinated effort required to address them. In multiple hearings in the Small Business Committee, SBA has not been able to explain how they are addressing these urgent issues. By creating OEM, and empowering a Senior Executive Service level director to lead the office, we in Congress can ensure that SBA is giving the problems that underserved entrepreneurs face the attention and resources they deserve.

Eliminating disparities in the capital markets for underserved business owners is not just the right thing to do, it will spur growth in the American economy.

In the years since the Great Recession, minority-owned small businesses have been driving the growth of small business formation in spite of the significant headwinds they face. Just imagine what they could do if SBA was laser focused on removing some of those headwinds. SBA has helped level the playing field for underserved communities in government contracting, and entrepreneurial development, but access to capital is the only major area where there is no office specific to the needs of underserved communities.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this critical piece of legislation, so SBA can begin making the concerted effort required to help more underserved entrepreneurs overcome barriers, start successful businesses, and create jobs.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 2361. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to increase lending to underserved borrowers through the largest loan program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Closing the Credit Gap Act to make the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Community Advantage program permanent.

SBA created Community Advantage in 2011 to provide capital and support to small businesses that have been historically underserved by SBA's highest volume loan program, 7(a).

Community Advantage allows non-profit mission lenders like SBA micro-lenders, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) and SBA 504 lenders to make 7(a) loans of up to \$250,000 to small businesses.

The program has shown year after year that it is more capable of getting capital into the hands of minority, women and veteran entrepreneurs than the 7(a) program. During Fiscal Year 2018, the most recent year for which complete data is available, only 4.5 percent of 7(a) approvals went to Black business owners compared to 12 percent of Community Advantage approvals; 9 percent of 7(a) approvals went to Hispanic borrowers compared to 17 percent in the Community Advantage program; women-owned businesses received only 18 percent of 7(a) approvals while receiving 30 percent of all Community Advantage approvals; and veterans, who only received 4 percent of 7(a) approvals, received 10 percent of approvals in the Community Advantage program.

Capital is the lifeblood of small businesses, so for many women, minority, veteran and other underserved entrepreneurs, Community Advantage is a lifeline, because the program fills a gap in traditional credit markets.

Minority-owned business are two to three times more likely to be denied credit; more likely to avoid applying for loans, based on the belief that they will be turned down; and more likely to receive smaller loans and pay higher interest rates on the loans that they do receive. Rural businesses owners often face an uphill battle to secure funding for their startups. And women are significantly less likely than men to be approved for a business loan and are more likely to experience funding gaps.

My bill will make this vital program a permanent loan product administered by SBA, and it will allow SBA to lift the cap up to \$350,000 from \$250,000 to help borrowers in more expensive regions and industries, as well as victims of abusive loan products.

My home State of Maryland has the highest concentration of minority- and women-owned businesses in the country. That designation makes me proud, but it also makes me think of the countless entrepreneurs whose dreams of business ownership or growth remain unfulfilled because they could not get financing.

If we pass the Closing the Credit Gap Act, we can empower more entrepreneurs who have the ideas but not the networks or capital needed to start and grow their businesses and create jobs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINES, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2390. A bill to prohibit the imposition of the death penalty for any violation of Federal law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2390

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

**SECTION 1. PROHIBITION ON IMPOSITION OF DEATH SENTENCE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person may be sentenced to death or put to death on or after the date of enactment of this Act for any violation of Federal law.

(b) PERSONS SENTENCED BEFORE DATE OF ENACTMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any person sentenced to death before the date of enactment of this Act for any violation of Federal law shall be resentenced.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2400. A bill to promote cannabis research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2400

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

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the "Expanding Cannabis Research and Information Act".

**SEC. 2. CANNABIS RESEARCH AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.**

(a) NATIONAL CANNABIS RESEARCH AGENCY.—Part B of title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

**"SEC. 409K. NATIONAL CANNABIS RESEARCH AGENDA.**

"Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Expanding Cannabis Research and Information Act, the Director of NIH, in collaboration with the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, shall develop a national cannabis research agenda that addresses key questions and gaps in evidence, including with respect to each of the following:

"(1) The efficacy of cannabis in providing therapeutic benefits for certain priority diseases or conditions, which may include epilepsy, multiple sclerosis-related spasticity, chemotherapy-induced pain and discomfort, using cannabis as an alternative to opioid analgesics for acute or chronic pain, sleep apnea, Tourette syndrome, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and any other disease or condition determined to be appropriate and of importance by the Director.

"(2) The effect of cannabis on at-risk populations, including children, older individuals, and pregnant or breast-feeding women.

"(3) The long-term effects of cannabis use, including dose-response relationship and the connection between cannabis use and behavioral health.

"(4) The clinically appropriate modes of delivery of cannabis.

"(5) Public safety considerations related to cannabis, including—

"(A) variation in the potency of cannabis products;

"(B) youth access to and use of cannabis, including marketing, packaging, edible formulations, and flavor options that target youth;

"(C) risk factors for cannabis misuse;

"(D) impaired driving related to cannabis use; and

“(E) accidental ingestion of cannabis.”.

(b) SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES.—Part A of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 241 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“SEC. 310B. SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES ON CANNABIS USE.**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in collaboration with the Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, shall carry out surveillance activities to collect population-wide data on cannabis use.

“(b) PERMISSIBLE ACTIVITIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out activities under this section, the Secretary may collect, as appropriate, with respect to cannabis use—

“(A) data on—

“(i) health outcomes, including biological data;

“(ii) health care utilization, which shall include hospitalizations and utilization of emergency departments related to consumption of cannabis, including among youth;

“(iii) demographic factors associated with cannabis use;

“(iv) the variety of products and delivery modes used; and

“(v) other relevant health information to improve the understanding of cannabis use in all age groups and sub-populations; and

“(B) data through public health surveillance systems, surveys, questionnaires, and databases of health care records, including, as appropriate, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, the Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System, the Monitoring the Future health survey, the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, or the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (or any successor surveys).

“(2) PRIVACY.—Any data collected under paragraph (1) shall be collected in manner that protects personal privacy to the extent, at a minimum, that is required under applicable Federal and State law.”.

**SEC. 3. RESCHEDULING OF MARIJUANA.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of schedule I of section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)) is amended by striking paragraph (10).

(b) SCHEDULE III.—Schedule III of section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) Marihuana.”.

**SEC. 4. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN CANNABIS RESEARCH.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part B of title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284 et seq.), as amended by section 2(a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

**“SEC. 409L. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN CANNABIS RESEARCH.**

“(a) DESIGNATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of NIH shall designate institutions of higher education as Centers of Excellence in Cannabis Research for the purpose of interdisciplinary research related to cannabis and other biomedical, behavioral, and social issues related to cannabis. No institution of higher education may be designated as a Center unless an application therefor has been submitted to, and approved by, the Director of NIH. Such an application shall be submitted in such manner and contain such information as the Director of NIH may reasonably require. The Director of NIH may not approve such an application unless—

“(A) the application contains or is supported by reasonable assurances that—

“(i) at least 1 individual employed by the applicant—

“(I) is registered under section 303(f) of the Controlled Substances Act to conduct research with controlled substances in schedule III of section 202(c) of that Act; and

“(II) is an active participant in the cannabis research activities of the applicant;

“(ii) the applicant has not had a registration to conduct research with controlled substances under section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act denied, revoked, or suspended under section 304 of that Act;

“(iii) the applicant has the experience, or capability, to conduct, through biomedical, behavioral, social, and related disciplines, long-term research on cannabis and to provide coordination of such research among such disciplines;

“(iv) the applicant has available to it sufficient personnel and facilities (including laboratory, reference, storage, security, and data analysis facilities) to carry out the research plan required under subparagraph (B); and

“(v) the applicant has the capacity to conduct academic courses and train students and professionals on appropriate research and knowledge of cannabis; and

“(B) the application contains a detailed 5-year plan for research relating to cannabis.

“(2) GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION.—The Director of NIH shall ensure geographic representation across the United States in designating institutions of higher education as Centers of Excellence in Cannabis Research.

“(3) TERM OF DESIGNATION.—A designation under this section shall be for a period of 5 years. An institution of higher education may reapply in accordance with the requirements under paragraph (1) for a subsequent designation under this section.

“(b) CANNABIS RESEARCH.—

“(1) GRANTS OR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director of NIH may make grants to, or enter into cooperative agreements with, Centers that have been designated under this section to expand the current and ongoing interdisciplinary research and clinical trials relating to cannabis research.

“(B) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts made available under a grant or cooperative agreement under subparagraph (A) may be used to address key questions and gaps in evidence addressed by the national cannabis research agenda described in paragraphs (1) through (5) of section 409K.

“(2) RESEARCH RESULTS.—The Director of NIH shall promptly disseminate research results under this subsection to relevant governmental, academic, and research entities.

“(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CANNABIS.—The term ‘cannabis’ has the meaning given the term ‘marijuana’ in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act.

“(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the meaning given the term in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965.”.

(b) REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 303(f) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(f)) is amended by adding after the period at the end the following: “The Attorney General shall register under this part practitioners at Centers of Excellence in Cannabis Research designated under section 409L of the Public Health Service Act to conduct research with marihuana. No separate registration shall be required for each individual employed by a Center of Excellence in Cannabis Research who is conducting research described in subsection (a)(1) of that section and in accordance with applicable State and local laws, nor shall separate registrations be required for distinct research activities, including research activities re-

lated to distinct constituent compounds of marihuana or amended protocols. The registration shall expire on the date on which the entity is no longer designated as such a Center of Excellence in Cannabis Research under that section. A Center of Excellence in Cannabis Research registered under this part may cultivate marihuana, including any constituent component of marihuana, to conduct research under this part if the Attorney General has determined that the research to be conducted is for legitimate scientific research and is consistent with effective controls against diversion. A Center of Excellence in Cannabis Research may contract with such additional manufacturers of marihuana registered under this section to meet the needs of the Center of Excellence in Cannabis Research to the maximum extent permissible under international treaties to which the United States is a signatory and which govern marihuana. Before entering into such contract, the Center of Excellence in Cannabis Research shall submit to the Attorney General a request to enter into the contract that includes information to demonstrate the experience or capability of the contractor to conduct such cultivation and assurances that the contractor will comply with the provisions of this Act. Not later than 60 days after the date on which the request is submitted, the request shall be deemed to be approved by the Attorney General, unless the Attorney General determines that the granting of such request is inconsistent with the public interest. A Center of Excellence in Cannabis Research registered under this section may purchase or acquire commercially available marihuana for the purpose of research described in section 409L(a)(1) of the Public Health Service Act in accordance with the law of the State in which the transaction occurs. No Federal funds may be used by the Center of Excellence in Cannabis Research for such purchase or acquisition.”.

By Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2410. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to modify the requirements for permits for dredged or fill material, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, in my maiden floor speech on May 9, I spoke on behalf of thousands of Mississippians suffering from consecutive months of catastrophic flooding in the South Mississippi Delta.

Today I rise again to speak on behalf of thousands of Mississippians who are still suffering from catastrophic flooding, which started in January and continues to disrupt the lives of residents in the Mississippi Delta and my State overall.

Floodwaters must recede before damages can be fully assessed, but we already know that more than 600 households have suffered severe damage, nearly 400 families have been displaced since February, and agricultural losses will likely exceed \$800 million. Much of the necessary infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and drainage culverts are beyond repair.

In June, LaTamela Taylor—13 weeks pregnant—and Darron Wilson died when their car lost control and sank into the floodwaters. Something must be done.

My colleagues might ask: How could an area more than 11 times the size of Washington, DC, remain underwater for nearly 7 months? How could floodwaters swamp more than half a million acres of homes, businesses, highways, forests, and farmlands spanning six Mississippi counties for so long?

The answer is quite simple. Similar to New Orleans, a complex system of levees and floodgates constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers protected the roughly 1,446-square-mile Yazoo Backwater area in West Central Mississippi. This levee system protects the areas when the Mississippi River is high and the floodgates are closed. However, these same protections become the problem when the river is high, floodgates are closed, and excess rainfall occurs. The interior creeks and rivers have no way to drain, and the result is a bathtub-like effect.

Unlike New Orleans and numerous Federal flood control projects up and down the Mississippi River, there is no mechanism to remove the trapped water from the Yazoo Backwater area. Aside from evaporation, pumping is the only viable option for removing vast amounts of water that have no place to go.

This year, the Mississippi River remained above flood stage longer than anytime in recorded history. The floodgates to prevent the Mississippi River from backing up into the Yazoo Backwater area were closed in January. Above-average rainfall occurred in the months thereafter, and here we are today with a disaster on our hands.

For nearly 7 months, more than a half million acres of land—866-square-mile area—has been underwater. Little attention outside of Mississippi was paid to the lives lost, the destroyed homes, or the displaced families.

Roughly, 225,000 acres of agricultural crops have been destroyed or will go unplanted this year. Hundreds of thousands of acres of Timberland ruined. Whitetail deer, black bear, turkey, and other wildlife are starving to death and spreading the disease, as you can see from these pictures. Wetlands have become lakes. Stagnant, contaminated water continues to threaten human and environmental health. The list goes on.

Paul Hartfield, an endangered species biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said: "This is biblical proportion. Nothing like this has ever been seen."

While he is correct in that the current situation in the South Mississippi Delta is a complete disaster—the worst backwater flood since 1973—devastating flooding in the area has become almost an annual occurrence.

This year marks the 10th time the Yazoo Backwater area has flooded since 2008, each time causing hundreds of millions of dollars in damages. The area residents cannot sustain this, and they certainly do not deserve this.

According to U.S. census data, roughly 35 percent of the residents of the six-

county area live in poverty. The median household income is \$31,187 per year below the national average. This perpetual flooding plagues agriculture production, which has damaged the primary economic mainstay in this region and increased unemployment. I fear what the 2020 census will reveal.

In a 1982 environmental impact statement, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stated the following:

Flooding in the Yazoo Area is historic and will continue as long as pumps are not constructed to complete the flood control system for the area. The flooding will continue to damage crops, homes, roads, and other improvements in the area project.

In a 2007 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, the Corps stated the following:

The no-action alternative would not eliminate any of the flood damages the area has historically experienced. Existing Yazoo Backwater flood duration and frequency would continue to adversely affect residential and nonresidential structures. Flooding would also have adverse impacts on the standard of living for residents, interrupting daily practices and travel to work, school, and church.

The Corps of Engineers was accurate in its predictions. Mississippians are living these predictions out in real life, and they have for years. It is time for the people of Mississippi to receive the level of flood protection promised to them by the Federal Government in 1941. It is time for the Corps of Engineers to complete the last remaining unconstructed feature of a 77-year flood control effort—the Yazoo Backwater pumps.

The people of Mississippi are beyond ready to see this crisis resolved. They are, frankly, extremely frustrated with the Federal Government. More than 17,000 people have signed a petition to remove an Environmental Protection Agency 2008 regulatory veto preventing construction of the pumps. Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, and many other State leaders and organizations have been overwhelmingly in their support and advocacy for the pumps.

I am grateful for this administration's responsiveness to Mississippi's perpetual flood problems and needs, and I will continue to work with the administration, relevant Federal Government agencies and departments to see this through.

As I continue working to provide greater predictability and regulatory certainty for Mississippians and the American public, I am committed in my capacity as a U.S. Senator to proposing commonsense reforms to the laws governing the regulation of our Nation's waters and permitting process.

For this reason, I, along with the senior Senator from Mississippi, have introduced the Flood Reduction, Wildlife Habitat, and Water Quality Improvement Act of 2019. This legislation seeks to make commonsense reforms to section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Our bill mirrors the directives outlined in Executive Order No. 13807 issued by President Donald Trump on August 24, 2017, and would establish greater discipline and accountability in the environmental review and permitting process for infrastructure projects.

More specifically, it would prohibit EPA from vetoing a Corps of Engineers flood control project specifically authorized by Congress. This is a basic constitutional principle of separation of powers. Further, upon enactment, it would immediately nullify any prior veto determinations made by EPA if said actions had resulted in severe flooding and damage to life and property.

In closing, the arguments I have heard in opposition to this project are not valid. Pumps will save lives, property, local infrastructure, wildlife, and the environment. As we are here going about our daily lives, enjoying the comfort of the home we will return to today after work, these Mississippians are just trying to get through the next 30 minutes to keep their sanity and emotions intact. The real-life experiences Mississippians have endured over time tell the true story.

It is time for the Federal Government to make good on its promises. It is time to construct the pumps.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I congratulate the junior Senator from Mississippi, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. I thank her for her leadership. She took the lead on this legislation, and I am delighted and honored to join her in this regard.

If Americans could take a moment, a few hours, to come to the South Delta of Mississippi and see for themselves what Senator HYDE-SMITH is talking about, they would understand the gravity of this situation.

She mentioned 7 months. If you are there today, you see dead wildlife floating on the floodwaters. You see coffins that had been buried that are floating on the surface of the floodwater in this area. There is no prospect of an income this year on these small farms and no prospect of a crop this year from some of the most fertile land the United States has been blessed with.

The tragedy of this is that it is entirely preventable. The prevention involves a promise that was made, as the Senator from Mississippi said, back in 1941 when this country and this Congress collectively adopted the Mississippi River and Tributaries System. That system included, up and down the river, a series of levees and flood-control structures. It also included a series of pumps. We are the only State that still, after this entire time, doesn't have our pump that has been promised to us.

There have been environmental challenges along the way—unsubstantiated, I might add. As a matter of fact, the environment is harmed, wildlife is harmed when a flood of this magnitude comes into the area, as graphically

demonstrated by some of the photographs the Senator has offered.

She mentioned the bathtub effect. Let me make sure my colleagues understand this. When the Mississippi floods, the Yazoo River backs up into the delta. As a result, we put down a floodgate, and that is designed to keep the flooded Yazoo River from backing up into this fertile farmland.

We had made a promise—or at least we thought we had a promise—to people with property 87 feet above sea level that when the floodwater behind the floodgate reaches 87, we would start pumping and pump that water back into the Mississippi River, where it has a minimal effect. This gives certainty. We know there is going to be a flood. People with property 87 feet above sea level and below know they are going to be flooded. But the promise of the pump is that if you have land that is above 87 feet, you can build a house there, you can put your business there, you can plant your crop there, and you can be certain that you will get the same protection from flooding as everybody else up and down the Mississippi River Tributary System gets. That is the promise that everybody else gets but has been foreclosed to us.

So I congratulate the Senator for thinking of this solution. That is a piece of legislation that would correct this problem. Clearly, it would also help if we simply got the Corps and the EPA to agree that the decision 10 years or so ago was made incorrectly and let us have what the rest of the system has; that is, a flood-control promise that gives us certainty that we can conduct our business, have a home, and conduct our lives as it was promised. That is all we are asking for. For 7 months this year and for weeks and months in previous years, we have been denied that.

I want to congratulate the Senator and associate myself with the remarks of the junior Senator from Mississippi and thank her for her leadership in thinking of this particular solution, which would give us a remedy, but also say that there are other ways this could be solved. We deserve the certainty that everyone else up and down the Mississippi system now has, and we deserve to have that promise made to us back in the 1940s fulfilled even at this late date.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

##### SENATE RESOLUTION 294—DESIGNATING AUGUST 16, 2019, AS “NATIONAL AIRBORNE DAY”

Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. KING, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

##### S. RES. 294

Whereas the members of the airborne forces of the Armed Forces of the United States have a long and honorable history as bold and fierce warriors who, for the national security of the United States and the defense of freedom and peace, project the ground combat power of the United States by air transport to the far reaches of the battle area and to the far corners of the world;

Whereas, on June 25, 1940, experiments with airborne operations by the United States began when the Army Parachute Test Platoon was first authorized by the Department of War;

Whereas, in July 1940, 48 volunteers began training for the Army Parachute Test Platoon;

Whereas August 16 marks the anniversary of the first official Army parachute jump, which took place on August 16, 1940, to test the innovative concept of inserting United States ground combat forces behind a battle line by means of a parachute;

Whereas the success of the Army Parachute Test Platoon in the days immediately before the entry of the United States into World War II validated the airborne operational concept and led to the creation of a formidable force of airborne formations that included the 11th, 13th, 17th, 82nd, and 101st Airborne Divisions;

Whereas, included in those divisions, and among other separate formations, were many airborne combat, combat support, and combat service support units that served with distinction and achieved repeated success in armed hostilities during World War II;

Whereas the achievements of the airborne units during World War II prompted the evolution of those units into a diversified force of parachute and air-assault units that, over the years, have fought in Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf region, and Somalia, and have engaged in peacekeeping operations in Lebanon, the Sinai Peninsula, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo;

Whereas, since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the members of the United States airborne forces, including members of the XVIII Airborne Corps, the 82nd Airborne Division, the 101st Airborne Division, the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) of the 25th Infantry Division, the 75th Ranger Regiment, special operations forces of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force, and other units of the Armed Forces, have demonstrated bravery and honor in combat, stability, and training operations in Afghanistan and Iraq;

Whereas the modern-day airborne forces also include other elite forces composed of airborne trained and qualified special operations warriors, including Army Special Forces, Marine Corps Reconnaissance units, Navy SEALs, and Air Force combat control and pararescue teams;

Whereas, of the members and former members of the United States airborne forces, thousands have achieved the distinction of making combat jumps, dozens have earned the Medal of Honor, and hundreds have earned the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, or other decorations and awards for displays of heroism, gallantry, intrepidity, and valor;

Whereas the members and former members of the United States airborne forces are all members of a proud and honorable tradition that, together with the special skills and achievements of those members, distinguishes the members as intrepid combat parachutists, air assault forces, special operation forces, and, in the past, glider troops;

Whereas individuals from every State of the United States have served gallantly in the airborne forces, and each State is proud of the contributions of its paratrooper veterans during the many conflicts faced by the United States;

Whereas the history and achievements of the members and former members of the United States airborne forces warrant special expressions of the gratitude of the people of the United States; and

Whereas, since the airborne forces, past and present, celebrate August 16 as the anniversary of the first official jump by the Army Parachute Test Platoon, August 16 is an appropriate day to recognize as National Airborne Day: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates August 16, 2019, as “National Airborne Day”; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to observe National Airborne Day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

##### SENATE RESOLUTION 295—DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2019 AS “CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY MONTH”

Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. CARPER, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

##### S. RES. 295

Whereas campus-related housing fires at colleges in Texas, Oregon, Illinois, Washington, D.C., Pennsylvania, and other States have tragically cut short the lives of several young people;

Whereas, since January 2000, at least 175 people, including students, parents, and children, have died in campus-related fires;

Whereas approximately 87 percent of those deaths occurred in off-campus occupancies;

Whereas a majority of college students in the United States live in off-campus occupancies;

Whereas a number of fatal fires have occurred in buildings in which the occupants had compromised or deactivated the fire safety systems;

Whereas automatic fire alarm systems and smoke alarms provide early warning of a fire that is necessary for occupants of a building and the fire department to take appropriate action;

Whereas an automatic fire sprinkler system is a highly effective method of controlling or extinguishing a fire in its early stages, protecting the lives of the building occupants;

Whereas many college students live in an off-campus occupancy, fraternity or sorority house, or residence hall that is not adequately protected by an automatic fire sprinkler system and an automatic fire alarm system or adequate smoke alarm;

Whereas fire safety education is an effective method of reducing the occurrence of fires and the resulting loss of life and property damage;

Whereas college students do not routinely receive effective fire safety education while in college;

Whereas educating young people in the United States about the importance of fire safety is vital to help ensure that young people engage in fire-safe behavior during college and after college; and

Whereas developing a generation of adults who practice fire safety may significantly reduce future loss of life: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of September 2019 as “Campus Fire Safety Month”; and