

Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2898, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for a full annuity supplement for certain air traffic controllers.

S. 2941

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2941, a bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a consumer recycling education and outreach grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 2942

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 2942, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that certain contributions by government entities are treated as contributions to capital.

S. 2949

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2949, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants to eligible organizations to provide service dogs to veterans with severe post-traumatic stress disorder, and for other purposes.

S. 2976

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2976, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an election to advance future child tax credits in the year of birth or adoption.

S. 2989

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2989, a bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify the mailing requirement relating to social security account statements.

S. 3001

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3001, a bill to provide for certain extensions with respect to the Medicare and Medicaid programs under titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act, and for other purposes.

S. 3004

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3004, a bill to protect human rights and enhance opportunities for LGBTI people around the world, and for other purposes.

S. 3016

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3016, a bill to amend the Fed-

eral Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure that consumers can make informed decisions in choosing between meat products such as beef and imitation meat products, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, his name and the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 4, a joint resolution requiring the advice and consent of the Senate or an Act of Congress to suspend, terminate, or withdraw the United States from the North Atlantic Treaty and authorizing related litigation, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 98

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 98, a resolution establishing the Congressional Gold Star Family Fellowship Program for the placement in offices of Senators of children, spouses, and siblings of members of the Armed Forces who are hostile casualties or who have died from a training-related injury.

S. RES. 371

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 371, a resolution reaffirming the support of the United States for the people of the Republic of South Sudan and calling on all parties to uphold their commitments to peace and dialogue as outlined in the 2018 revitalized peace agreement.

S. RES. 385

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 385, a resolution celebrating the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of both Germany and Europe, and the spread of democracy around the world.

S. RES. 447

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 447, a resolution expressing serious concern about widespread irregularities in Bolivia's October 20, 2019, general elections and supporting the convening of new elections in Bolivia at the earliest possible date.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 3035. A bill to provide that the amount of time that an elderly offender must serve before being eligible for placement in home detention is to be reduced by the amount of good time credits earned by the prisoner, and for

other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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. 3035

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 "Elderly Home Detention Pilot Program Technical Corrections Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. CREDITS FOR CERTAIN ELDERLY NON-VIOLENT OFFENDERS.

Section 231(g)(5)(A)(ii) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (34 U.S.C. 60541(g)(5)(A)(ii)) is amended by striking "to which the offender was sentenced" and inserting "reduced by any credit toward the service of the prisoner's sentence awarded under section 3624(b) of title 18, United States Code".

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 3042. A bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating to prescribe additional regulations to secure the safety of individuals and property on board certain small passenger vessels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the "Small Passenger Vessel Safety Act of 2019".

This bill would prevent future tragedies like the one that happened onboard the *Conception* passenger vessel off the coast of Santa Cruz Island, California. This was the worst maritime disaster in modern California history, and my thoughts continue to be with the victims and their loved ones.

On September 2, 2019, thirty-four people were tragically killed onboard the vessel when a fire started while passengers were sleeping below deck after a nighttime swim. The victims of the boat fire—thirty-three passengers and one crewmember—were athletes, immigrants, CEO's, and students. All were united by love of the water, marine life, and their adventurous spirit.

The *Conception* boat fire was a tragedy that must never be allowed to happen again. Reports indicate the fire consumed the boat, including the salon, galley compartment, and the aft deck, and causes include overloading of the electric system, possibly from rechargeable devices with lithium ion batteries. The lack of an interconnected fire alarm system throughout the vessel meant passengers and crew were not made aware of the fire until key areas of escape were already engulfed. Critical time—time that could have saved lives—was lost. This bill addresses these issues and potential causes.

While investigations by the National Transportation Safety Board and the Coast Guard are still ongoing, it is

clear regulatory changes are needed to ensure small passenger vessels have the right safety measures in place to limit the possibility of fire and help evacuate the vessel of passengers in the event a fire does start.

The *Conception* is one of about 325 small passenger vessels built before 1996 and exempt from stricter safety standards imposed on newer vessels.

This bill offers a number of common-sense provisions that will improve passenger vessel safety. These include: requiring these types of vessels to have no less than two avenues of escape from all areas accessible to passengers; mandating safety standards for the handling, storage and operation of lithium ion batteries; and, establishing standards for interconnected fire alarm systems.

I appreciate the hard work of the National Transportation Safety Board and the U.S. Coast Guard Inspections and Compliance Directorate. I especially appreciate the Commandant's Marine Safety Information Bulletin issued on September 10 reminding owners, operators and masters of passenger vessels to adhere to the regulations related to firefighting, lifesaving, emergency preparation and means of escape. And, more specifically, I appreciate the attention to the issue of unsupervised charging of lithium-ion batteries and the extensive use of power strips and extension cords.

Given the horrific nature of this tragedy, it is imperative that we establish stricter safety standards onboard these boats where so many children and families have such enjoyment. I believe this bill is a pragmatic, common-sense solution to improve safety on these older vessels, and I urge it to be included in the Coast Guard Reauthorization Act.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 3048. A bill to authorize certain aliens seeking asylum to be employed in the United States while their applications are being adjudicated; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act of 2019, which is similar to a bill introduced by Representative PINGREE in the House. My bill would allow asylum seekers to seek employment 30 days after applying for asylum, provided their applications are not frivolous, their identities have been verified, and their names run through the Federal government's terrorist watch lists. This change would allow asylum applicants to work and contribute to society without being dependent on assistance from local governments while their claims are being adjudicated.

Under current law, asylum seekers must wait 180 days after filing their applications before they are allowed to work. The 180-day requirement was

adopted by the Clinton Administration in 1994 out of concern that some asylum seekers might apply for asylum primarily as a means of getting a work authorization. Clearly, this change has only transferred the burden of care for these asylum seekers onto communities across the Nation.

One such community is Portland, Maine. Earlier this year, over the span of several weeks, a surge of asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola arrived in Portland after crossing our southern border. These asylum seekers could have given a much-needed boost to Maine's very tight labor market—our unemployment rate is just 2.8 percent—but the lengthy work-authorization process prevents these asylum seekers from getting jobs even to support themselves.

Thankfully, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Humanitarian Assistance and Security at the Southern Border Act of 2019 made funds available to assist local communities dealing with a sudden influx of asylum seekers. The City of Portland and private organizations in southern Maine received \$892,586 from that Act. While I am pleased that these funds have been provided to Portland and other communities around our country, it would be a better solution if those seeking asylum were able to join the workforce and achieve self-sufficiency as quickly as possible while awaiting the outcome of their cases.

It is my hope that the change proposed by my bill will lessen the burden on the budgets of communities hosting asylum seekers while allowing these individuals and their families to support themselves as they want to do, bringing needed skills to the cities and towns in which they settle. I encourage my colleagues to support it.

By Mr. MORAN:

S.J. Res. 61. A joint resolution approving the request of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for a waiver under section 1703E(f) of title 38, United States Code; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to submit the following letter from U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Robert L. Wilkie, for the RECORD.

So Ordered.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC 20510.

DEAR SENATOR MCCONNELL: In accordance with the requirements of section 1703E(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code, enclosed is the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) report on a request for a waiver to allow VA to pilot community partnered collaborations to expand dental care for Veterans. We request that copies of this waiver be provided to the Chair and Ranking Member of applicable standing committees with jurisdiction to report a bill to amend the provision or provisions of law that would be waived by VA, consistent with section 1703E(f)(3).

As required by section 1703E(f)(2), the enclosed report describes in detail the specific

authorities to be waived under the pilot program; the standard or standards to be used in the pilot program in lieu of the waived authorities; the reasons for such waiver or waivers; a description of the metric or metrics VA will use to determine the effect of the waiver or waivers upon the access to and quality, timeliness, or patient satisfaction of care and services furnished through the pilot program; the anticipated cost savings, if any, of the pilot program; the schedule for interim reports on the pilot program describing the results of the pilot program so far and the feasibility and advisability of continuing the pilot program; the schedule for the termination of the pilot program and the submission of a final report on the pilot program describing the result of the pilot program and the feasibility and advisability of making the pilot program permanent; and the estimated budget of the pilot program.

Consistent with section 17.450 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, this report also includes the geographic locations for each pilot program, the rationale for those selections, and how VA believes the selected locations will address deficits in care for a defined population; any applicable provision of existing regulations implementing any laws to be waived; and any more specific definitions of terms included in section 17.450(b), as necessitated by the specific provisions of the proposed pilot program.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of this waiver proposal to Congress and that its enactment would be in accord with the program of the President.

Thank you for your continuing support of our mission. A similar letter has been sent to other leaders of the Congress and the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs.

Sincerely,

ROBERT L. WILKIE.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 453—HONORING THE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. UDALL, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. Kaine, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 453

Whereas more than 81,000 people serve as employees of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development, including locally employed staff, protecting and advancing national security, freedom, democracy, development, and free markets, for the benefit of the people of the United States and the international community;

Whereas employees of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development together represent the United States in maintaining diplomatic relations in over 250 posts in 180 countries around the world, including in many inhospitable and dangerous regions;

Whereas employees of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development promote American values and interests at home and abroad