

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 FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 18, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 18, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 18, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the nomination of Jovita Carranza, of Illinois, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 18, 2019, at 2 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SUPPORTING VETERANS IN STEM CAREERS ACT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 314, S. 153.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 153) to promote veteran involvement in STEM education, computer science, and scientific research, and for other purposes.

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

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Supporting Veterans in STEM Careers Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means the Director of the National Science Foundation.

(2) FOUNDATION.—The term “Foundation” means the National Science Foundation.

(3) STEM.—The term “STEM” has the meaning given the term in section 2 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 6621 note).

(4) VETERAN.—The term “veteran” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. SUPPORTING VETERANS IN STEM EDUCATION AND COMPUTER SCIENCE.

(a) SUPPORTING VETERAN INVOLVEMENT IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND STEM EDUCATION.—

The Director shall, through the research and education activities of the Foundation, encourage veterans to study and pursue careers in STEM and computer science, in coordination with other Federal agencies that serve veterans.

(b) VETERAN OUTREACH PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a plan for how the Foundation can enhance its outreach efforts to veterans. Such plan shall—

(1) report on the Foundation’s existing outreach activities;

(2) identify the best method for the Foundation to leverage existing authorities and programs to facilitate and support veterans in STEM careers and studies, including teaching programs; and

(3) include options for how the Foundation could track veteran participation in research and education programs of the Foundation, and describe any barriers to collecting such information.

(c) NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD INDICATORS REPORT.—The National Science Board shall provide in its annual report on indicators of the state of science and engineering in the United States any available and relevant data on veterans in science and engineering careers or education programs.

(d) ROBERT NOYE TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE.—Section 10 of the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 1862n-1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(5)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) higher education programs that serve or support veterans.”;

(2) in subsection (b)(2)(F)—

(A) by striking “and students” and inserting “, students”; and

(B) by inserting “, and veterans” before the period at the end;

(3) in subsection (c)(2), by inserting “and veterans” before the period at the end; and

(4) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting “and veterans” before the period at the end.

(e) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS AND MASTER TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS UPDATE.—Section 10A(d) of the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 1862n-1a(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(F)—

(A) by striking “and individuals” and inserting “, individuals”; and

(B) by inserting “, and veterans” before the period at the end; and

(2) in paragraph (4)(B), by inserting “and veterans” before the period at the end.

(f) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION COMPUTER AND NETWORK SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS UPDATE.—Section 5(a) of the Cyber Security Research and Development Act (15 U.S.C. 7404(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “and students who are veterans” after “these fields”; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (J) as subparagraph (K); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (I) the following:

“(J) creating opportunities for veterans to transition to careers in computer and network security; and”.

(g) GRADUATE TRAINEESHIPS IN COMPUTER AND NETWORK SECURITY RESEARCH UPDATE.—Section 5(c)(6)(C) of the Cyber Security Research and Development Act (15 U.S.C.

7404(c)(6)(C)) is amended by inserting “or veterans” after “disciplines”.

(h) VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES STEM EDUCATION INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall establish, or designate, an interagency working group to improve veteran and military spouse equity and representation in STEM fields.

(2) DUTIES OF INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—An interagency working group established under paragraph (1) shall develop and facilitate the implementation by participating agencies of a strategic plan, which shall—

(A) specify and prioritize short- and long-term objectives;

(B) specify the common metrics that will be used by Federal agencies to assess progress toward achieving such objectives;

(C) identify barriers veterans face in reentering the workforce, including a lack of formal STEM education, career guidance, and the process of transferring military credits and skills to college credits;

(D) identify barriers military spouses face in establishing careers in STEM fields;

(E) describe the approaches that each participating agency will take to address administratively the barriers described in subparagraphs (C) and (D); and

(F) identify any barriers that require Federal or State legislative or regulatory changes in order to be addressed.

(3) REPORT.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall—

(A) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, submit to Congress the strategic plan required under paragraph (2); and

(B) include in the annual report required by section 101(d) of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 6621(d)) a description of any progress made in carrying out the activities described in paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(4) SUNSET.—An interagency working group established under paragraph (1) shall terminate on the date that is 3 years after the date that it is established.

SEC. 4. COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES STUDY AND REPORT ON BARRIERS FACED BY STUDENT VETERANS PURSUING DEGREES IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, OR MATH.

(a) STUDY.—Not later than August 1, 2022, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete a study on academic success rates of student veterans pursuing covered degrees and barriers faced by such students in pursuing such degrees.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Assessment of available information on the percentage or number of student veterans pursuing a covered degree with educational assistance furnished under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) Assessment of available information on the percentage or number of such students who pursue a covered degree and do not obtain such degree in four or fewer academic years.

(3) Identification of the reasons that such students do not obtain such degree in four or fewer academic years and whether such reasons are barriers to obtaining such degrees.

(4) Development of recommendations for legislative or administrative action to better align the educational assistance furnished under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, with the needs of such students and address the reasons identified under paragraph (3).

(c) REPORT.—Not later than August 1, 2022, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on the findings of the Comptroller General with respect to the study completed under subsection (a), along with recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(d) DEFINITION OF COVERED DEGREE.—In this section, the term “covered degree” means a standard, undergraduate college degree in a field listed under section 3320(b)(4)(A)(i) of title 38, United States Code.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

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

The bill (S. 153), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

VERA C. RUBIN OBSERVATORY DESIGNATION ACT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3196 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3196) to designate the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope as the “Vera C. Rubin Observatory.”

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I further ask the bill be considered read three times 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. 3196) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RICHARD G. LUGAR POST OFFICE

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 3105, introduced earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3105) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 456 North Meridian Street in Indianapolis, Indiana, as the “Richard G. Lugar Post Office”.

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

Mr. LANKFORD. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 3105) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 3105

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

SECTION 1. RICHARD G. LUGAR POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 456 North Meridian Street in Indianapolis, Indiana, shall be known and designated as the “Richard G. Lugar Post Office”.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the “Richard G. Lugar Post Office”.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 2020 CENSUS AND ENCOURAGING INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2020 CENSUS TO ENSURE A COMPLETE AND ACCURATE COUNT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 31, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 31) recognizing the importance and significance of the 2020 Census and encouraging individuals, families, and households across the United States to participate in the 2020 Census to ensure a complete and accurate count.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. LANKFORD. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 31) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

RECOGNIZING THE 71ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 450 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 450), recognizing the 71st anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the celebration of “Human Rights Day”.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions 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 resolution (S. Res. 450) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of December 10, 2019, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to Public Law 105-292, as amended by Public Law 106-55, Public Law 107-228, and Public Law 112-75, appoints the following individual to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Rabbi Sharon A. Kleinbaum of New York.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls with respect to the cloture motions filed on the House messages to accompany H.R. 1865 and H.R. 1158 be waived.

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

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 397, H.R. 1759, AND H.R. 4018

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I understand there are three bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the titles of the bills for the first time en bloc.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 397) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a Pension Rehabilitation Trust Fund, to establish a Pension Rehabilitation Administration within the Department of the Treasury to make loans to multiemployer defined benefit plans, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 1759) to amend title III of the Social Security Act to extend reemployment services and eligibility assessments to all claimants for unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 4018) to provide that the amount of time that an elderly offender