

around mental health in the agricultural industry and workforce and to continue to reduce stigma associated with mental illness.

S. RES. 195

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 195, a resolution requesting information on El Salvador's human rights practices pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

S. RES. 208

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 208, a resolution supporting the designation of May 10, 2025, as "National Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Mental Health Day".

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 1709. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish direct care registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratio requirements in hospitals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the bipartisan Nurse Staffing Standards for Hospital Patient Safety and Quality Care Act. This legislation would improve patient care and increase nurse retention by setting mandatory minimum registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratios.

The bill would require hospitals to annually develop safe staffing plans that meet the bill's mandated minimum registered nurse staffing ratios and provide for additional staffing based on individual patient care needs. Further, the bill requires hospitals to post notices on minimum ratios and maintain records on registered nurse and other staffing.

The bill would also provide whistleblower protections, including administrative complaint process and cause of action, for nurses who speak out against assignments that are unsafe for the patient or nurse.

For each additional surgical patient in registered nurse's workload above the baseline nurse-to-patient ratio of 1 to 4, the likelihood of patient death within 30 days increases by 7 percent. Studies have also found that registered nurse staffing levels in hospitals that serve communities of color are often lower, contributing to disparities in care. Setting a single standard of nursing care across hospitals will improve outcomes for patients of color, including reduced readmission rates, increased satisfaction, and better obstetrical outcomes.

There are no Federal regulations on the number of patients a registered nurse can care for at one time in U.S. hospitals. As a result, registered nurses are consistently required to care for more patients than is safe, compromising patient care and negatively impacting patient outcomes.

This legislation would improve patient care and increase nurse retention by setting mandatory minimum registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratios.

I would like to thank Senator Merkley for coleading this legislation, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to enact this bill as soon as possible.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 215—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF MAY 12, 2025, THROUGH MAY 16, 2025, AS "VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH WEEK" TO CELEBRATE THE RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO IMPROVING THE LIVES OF COUNTLESS VETERANS, PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES, AND INDIVIDUALS AROUND THE WORLD

Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

S. RES. 215

Whereas, in 1925, the Veterans' Bureau, the predecessor to the Department of Veterans Affairs (referred to in this preamble as the "VA"), established the Medical Research Section, marking 2025 as the 100-year anniversary of VA research;

Whereas Dr. Philip B. Matz served as the first Research Chief of the Veterans' Bureau, advocating for hospital-based research directly related to improving the clinical conditions of veterans;

Whereas, in 1925, a system of diagnostic clinics with links to outside consultants was established by the Veterans' Bureau, evidencing the long connection that VA research has had to industry and innovation;

Whereas VA-affiliated nonprofit research and education corporations play a critical role in facilitating collaborations between VA research and industry, enabling VA investigators to participate in public-private partnerships to amplify their groundbreaking research efforts;

Whereas, in 1933, the Tumor Research Laboratory at the Hines Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Chicago, Illinois, became the first research laboratory to receive designated funds from the VA Central Office, leading to Dr. Robert Schrek identifying the connection between sun exposure and skin cancer;

Whereas VA research has led to medical breakthroughs and lifesaving procedures used by veterans and non-veterans across the United States and around the world, including the development of the concept of computed tomography scanning, the first effective treatments for tuberculosis, development of an implantable cardiac pacemaker, the first large clinical trials of hearing aids, the first successful transplantation of a liver, and many others;

Whereas research on Gila monster metabolism at the Bronx VA Medical Center created breakthroughs leading to the development of GLP-one agonist medications, which is broadly considered one of the most consequential health advances of the 21st century;

Whereas VA research in the field of mental health and the 10 Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Centers of the VA have revolutionized the treatment of several mental, behavioral, and neuropsychological conditions, including leading research in fields like post-traumatic stress, substance use, major depressive disorder, serious mental illness, and many others;

Whereas VA research facilities across the United States employ thousands of top-tier researchers and innovators who, as of 2024, conduct over 7,000 active research projects in numerous disciplines;

Whereas VA Puget Sound and their nonprofit affiliate, the Seattle Institute for Biomedical and Clinical Research, has been a nationally renowned research facility for over 75 years, housing over 750 continuing research projects in 2024 in numerous disciplines;

Whereas the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine has been awarded to VA researchers, including Dr. Andrew Schally, Dr. Rosalyn Yalow, and Dr. Ferid Murad, for their vital contributions to scientific knowledge;

Whereas, in 2025, during the 100-year anniversary of VA Research, the VA Office of Research and Development is recognizing researchers for their scholarly excellence and commitment to improving the lives of Veterans, including—

(1) Dr. Jean Beckham, VA Durham Health Care System;

(2) Dr. Robert Clark, South Texas Veterans Health Care System in San Antonio, TX;

(3) Dr. Daniel Hall, VA Pittsburgh Health Care System;

(4) Dr. Robert Kirsch, Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center;

(5) Dr. Vincent Marconi, Joseph Maxwell Cleland Atlanta VA Medical Center; and

(6) Dr. Arlan Richardson, Oklahoma City VA Health Care System; and

Whereas, May 12, 2025, through May 16, 2025, is the appropriate week to celebrate 100 years of VA research through "Veteran Affairs Research Week": Now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors and celebrates the 100-year anniversary of Department of Veterans Affairs (referred to in this resolution as the "VA") research, representing a century of lifesaving and cutting-edge research conducted by the VA which improves the lives of veterans, people in the United States, and individuals around the world;

(2) applauds the spirit of inquiry and commitment to scientific excellence of VA researchers and their affiliates, who ensure that veterans receive the most up-to-date, effective care and maintain the leadership and competitiveness of the United States in scientific research and healthcare;

(3) recognizes the critical importance of supporting VA research through robust funding, public support, and Federal cooperation;

(4) acknowledges that VA research facilities and their affiliates contribute significantly to the economies of their local communities; and

(5) supports the designation of the week of May 12, 2025, through May 16, 2025, as "Veteran Affairs Research Week".

SENATE RESOLUTION 216—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT PUBLIC SERVANTS SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES DURING PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. FETTERMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. RES. 216

Whereas the week of May 4 through May 10, 2025, has been designated as “Public Service Recognition Week” to honor employees of the Federal Government and State and local governments, and members of the uniformed services, for their contributions to the United States;

Whereas Public Service Recognition Week provides an opportunity to recognize and promote the important contributions of public servants and to honor the people who serve the United States at all levels of government and as members of the uniformed services;

Whereas millions of individuals serve the public in government service and as members of the uniformed services in every State, county, and city across the United States and around the world;

Whereas public servants provide crucial services to millions of people across the United States, supporting local programs and contributing to local economies;

Whereas public service is a noble calling involving a variety of challenging and rewarding professions and highly skilled and trained individuals offering their knowledge, effort, and skills in support of the public;

Whereas the United States is a great and prosperous country, and public service employees contribute significantly to that greatness and prosperity;

Whereas public servants—

(1) defend the freedom of the people of the United States and advance the interests of the United States and the ideals of democracy around the world;

(2) provide vital strategic support functions to the Armed Forces and serve in the National Guard and Reserves;

(3) fight crime and fires;

(4) ensure equal access to secure, efficient, and affordable mail service;

(5) deliver benefits under the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 301 et seq.), including benefits under the Medicare program under title XVIII of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.);

(6) fight disease and promote better health;

(7) protect the environment and the parks of the United States;

(8) enforce laws guaranteeing equal employment opportunity and healthy working conditions;

(9) defend and secure critical infrastructure;

(10) help the people of the United States recover from natural disasters, pandemics, and terrorist attacks;

(11) teach and work in schools and libraries;

(12) develop new technologies and explore Earth, the moon, and space to improve knowledge on how the world changes;

(13) improve and secure transportation systems;

(14) promote economic stability and growth;

(15) assist veterans of the Armed Forces; and

(16) provide critical support to the United States in a variety of other efforts and endeavors;

Whereas members of the uniformed services and civilian employees at all levels of government—

(1) provide a variety of services that make significant contributions to the general welfare of the United States;

(2) are on the front lines in the fight to defeat terrorism and maintain homeland security; and

(3) bravely defend the United States and its ideals; and

Whereas the week of May 4 through May 10, 2025, marks the 41st anniversary of Public Service Recognition Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of the week of May 4 through May 10, 2025, as “Public Service Recognition Week”;

(2) commends public servants during Public Service Recognition Week for their outstanding contributions to the United States throughout the year;

(3) salutes government employees and members of the uniformed services for their unyielding dedication to, and enthusiasm for, the public whom they serve;

(4) honors government employees and members of the uniformed services who have given their lives in service to their communities and the United States;

(5) encourages efforts to promote and celebrate public service careers at every level of government;

(6) expresses gratitude to the public servants who have selflessly answered the call to serve the United States, their State, and their communities; and

(7) expresses gratitude to the Federal workers who have selflessly answered the call to serve the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 217—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ROBERT FITZGERALD KENNEDY JR. DOES NOT HAVE THE CONFIDENCE OF THE SENATE OR OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO FAITHFULLY CARRY OUT THE DUTIES OF HIS OFFICE.

Ms. ALSOBROOKS (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. RES. 217

Whereas, while serving as the Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this preamble as the “Secretary”), Robert Fitzgerald Kennedy Jr., in violation of his constitutional oath, has engaged in a pattern of conduct that is incompatible with his constitutional and statutory duties as the Secretary, including by—

(1) failing to meet his obligations under section 1701 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300u), including the obligation to support “research and demonstrations respecting health information and health promotion, preventive health services, and education in the appropriate use of health care” and to increase “the application and use of health knowledge, skills, and practices by the general population in its patterns of daily living”;

(2) failing to meet his obligations under sections 402 and 464z-3 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 282; 285t), wherein it is clear that the congressional intent of National Institutes of Health research is to support programs for research, research training, and recruitment that “provide for an in-

crease in the number of women and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds (including racial and ethnic minorities) in the fields of biomedical and behavioral research” and to support research and training “with respect to minority health conditions and other populations with health disparities”;

(3) failing to meet his obligations under the many statutes that govern the programs of the Department of Health and Human Services (referred to in this preamble as the “Department”) and appropriate funding for the Department to administer such programs, in violation of Federal law and the Constitution of the United States, through his directed reduction in force and reorganization of Department functions, which was initiated with little regard to the impact of the reductions on congressionally mandated activities, the efficacy of government programs and services, or the very legality of the reductions; and

(4) failing to meet his obligations under the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15001 et seq.), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.), which together entrust the Secretary with ensuring both older Americans and individuals with disabilities are afforded the inherent dignity they are entitled to, including living where they choose with the ability to fully participate in their communities;

Whereas, under the direction of political leadership, the National Institutes of Health has sent hundreds of letters to Federal grant recipients at public research institutions announcing that various grants have been terminated because they “no longer effectuate agency priorities”, resulting in delays and terminations that have caused direct, immediate, significant, and irreparable harm to the States and to public research institutions;

Whereas on March 24, 2025, the Department abruptly and arbitrarily terminated \$11,000,000,000 of critical public health funding from States across the country, jeopardizing disease surveillance programs, substance abuse services, emergency preparedness initiatives, and funding to modernize State programs for childhood immunization and access to vaccinations, causing serious harm to public health and leaving States at risk for pandemics and the spread of disease;

Whereas these terminations exceeded the Secretary’s statutory authority and are unlawful under subchapter II of chapter 5, and chapter 7, of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Administrative Procedure Act”);

Whereas in late February of 2025, the Secretary and the Director of the National Institutes of Health launched a “reckless and illegal purge” of hundreds of research projects because they allegedly had “some alleged connection to ‘gender identity’ or diversity, equity, and inclusion”, when in reality, this new mandate was used as a guise to cut research from diverse researchers, diverse populations, or research related to health disparities;

Whereas according to court filings, this research included grants for Alzheimer’s research, research on disparities in pregnancy health, violence prevention among children, and the efficacy of preventative HIV medications, and as a result of these actions, “scientific advancements will be delayed, treatments will go undiscovered, human health will be compromised, and lives will be lost”;

Whereas 2 days after being sworn in as the Secretary, 5,200 probationary workers across multiple agencies of the Department received termination notices, in which these workers were told that they were “not fit for continued employment because your ability,