

(for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4664. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4665. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4666. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4667. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4668. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4669. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4670. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4671. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4672. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4673. Mr. GALLEGRO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4674. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4675. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4676. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4677. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4678. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4679. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4680. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4681. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4682. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4683. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4684. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4685. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4686. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. REED, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4687. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4688. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4689. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4690. Mr. KAINÉ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4691. Mr. KAINÉ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4692. Mr. KAINÉ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4693. Mr. KAINÉ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4694. Mr. KIM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4695. Mr. KIM (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4696. Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4697. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4698. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4699. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4700. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4701. Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4702. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4703. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4704. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4705. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4706. Mr. KIM (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4707. Mr. CORNYN proposed an amendment to the bill S. 4123, to prohibit preferential screening for Members of Congress at airports, and for other purposes.

SA 4708. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. GALLEGRO, and Mr. KELLY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 4657. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “agency”—

(A) means each authority of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of the Government of the United States; and

(B) includes each element of the District of Columbia public employer, as defined in section 1341(c) of title 31, United States Code;

(2) the term “covered contractor” means a contractor—

(A) with which an agency has a contract; and

(B) that, under the contract described in subparagraph (A)—

(i) provides support to an employee described in paragraph (3)(A); and

(ii) is required to perform work during a lapse in regular appropriations with respect to the agency to which the contractor provides support, as described in clause (i), based on a determination by the head of that agency that incurring an obligation to pay for that support in advance of available appropriations would be permissible under applicable law, including section 1341 of title 31, United States Code;

(3) the term “covered employee”—

(A) means each employee of an agency, without regard to whether, for any portion of the period beginning on October 1, 2025, and ending on the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) the head of that agency determined that the individual was an excepted employee or an employee performing emergency work; or

(ii) the individual was subject to furlough;

(B) includes—

(i) a member of the uniformed services on active duty; and

(ii) a member of a reserve component who, during a lapse in regular appropriations with respect to the applicable agency, performs active service or inactive duty training; and

(C) only includes an individual described in subparagraph (A) or (B) who was an employee or member on, or had accepted an offer of employment with the agency or had enlisted in or accepted an appointment to

the uniformed services (including a reserve component) on or before, the day before the date on which the applicable lapse in regular appropriations began;

(4) the term “lapse in regular appropriations”, with respect to an agency, means any period during which interim or full-year appropriations for the applicable fiscal year are not in effect for the agency; and

(5) the term “standard employee compensation” means, with respect to a covered employee, the standard rate of basic pay, allowances, pay differentials, benefits, and other payments otherwise payable on a regular basis to the covered employee.

(b) APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For fiscal year 2026, and any fiscal year thereafter, for any lapse in regular appropriations with respect to an agency, there are appropriated to the head of the agency, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, such sums as are necessary to provide—

(A) standard employee compensation to covered employees of the agency with respect to the period of the lapse in regular appropriations; and

(B) payment to covered contractors with respect to work that those covered contractors are required to perform for the agency during the period of the lapse in regular appropriations, pursuant to the terms of applicable contracts with those covered contractors.

(2) AGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The head of each agency to whom amounts are made available under paragraph (1) shall provide standard employee compensation to covered employees of the agency—

(A) if there is a lapse in regular appropriations ongoing on the date of enactment of this Act, as soon as is practicable, but not later than 7 days after the date of enactment of this Act, without regard to—

(i) scheduled pay dates; or

(ii) whether the covered employee was subject to furlough during such period; and

(B) with respect to any period of a lapse in regular appropriations beginning on or after the date of enactment of this Act, on the regularly scheduled pay dates of the covered employees.

(c) TERMINATION.—Appropriations and funds made available and authority granted under subsection (b) shall be available to the head of an agency until whichever of the following first occurs:

(1) The enactment into law of appropriations for the agency until the end of the applicable fiscal year (including a continuing appropriation) that provide amounts for the purposes for which amounts are made available under subsection (b).

(2) The enactment into law of appropriations for the agency until the end of the applicable fiscal year (including a continuing appropriation) without any appropriation for such purposes.

(d) LIMITATION TO INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY A SHUTDOWN.—Amounts provided under subsection (b) may not be used for a purpose described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (b)(1) for any portion of a lapse in regular appropriations for which a covered employee is provided with standard employee compensation, or a covered contractor is provided payment for performance of the applicable contract, respectively, using amounts other than amounts provided under subsection (b).

(e) INTERIM CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS.—Appropriations made available under subsection (b) may not be obligated by the head of an agency during any period during which continuing appropriations for the purposes for which amounts are made available under subsection (b) are in effect for the agency.

(f) CHARGING TO FUTURE APPROPRIATIONS.—Expenditures made pursuant to subsection

(b) shall be charged to the applicable appropriation, fund, or authorization whenever an Act in which such applicable appropriation, fund, or authorization is included is enacted into law.

(g) LIMITATION ON TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law (including any appropriation Act), the amounts provided under subsection (b)—

(1) shall be available solely for a purpose described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (b)(1); and

(2) may not be transferred, reprogrammed, obligated, or expended for any other purpose.

(h) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For fiscal year 2027, and each fiscal year thereafter, standard employee compensation, and payments to covered contractors, provided by an agency using amounts provided under subsection (b) shall be subject to the requirements, authorities, conditions, and limitations applicable with respect to the provision of standard employee compensation, or payment to covered contractors, respectively, by the agency under the Act that provided appropriations for the agency to provide standard employee compensation, or payment to covered contractors, respectively, immediately before the lapse in regular appropriations.

(2) FISCAL YEAR 2026.—For fiscal year 2026, standard employee compensation, and payments to covered contractors, provided by an agency using amounts provided under subsection (b) shall be subject to—

(A) the requirements, authorities, conditions, and limitations applicable with respect to the provision of standard employee compensation, or payment to covered contractors, respectively, by the agency under the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2026 (division A of Public Law 119-37); or

(B) if an Act is enacted after the date of enactment of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2026 (division A of Public Law 119-37) that provides continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2026 for the agency to provide standard employee compensation, or payment to covered contractors, respectively, the requirements, authorities, conditions, and limitations applicable with respect to the provision of standard employee compensation, or payment to covered contractors, respectively, by the agency under that subsequently enacted Act.

(i) AUTHORIZATION TO OBLIGATE AND EXPEND FUNDS.—Funds appropriated by this Act may be obligated and expended notwithstanding section 15 of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2680) and section 504(a)(1) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3094(a)(1)).

(j) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) STANDARD EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION.—This section shall be construed to provide each covered employee with standard employee compensation for the period of the lapse in regular appropriations as if the covered employee was performing the duties of the covered employee during the lapse in regular appropriations.

(2) NO CHANGE IN AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES.—Nothing in this section may be construed to require an agency to take any action that the agency is not required to take under the terms of a contract with a covered contractor during any period during which there is not a lapse in regular appropriations.

(k) AGENCY ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Covered employees and employees of covered contractors shall perform their typical duties to the maximum extent practicable during a lapse in regular appropriations.

(2) OTHER OBLIGATIONS OR EXPENDITURES.—This section does not authorize or necessarily imply that an agency or employee

may incur any obligations or expenditures that are not explicitly authorized by this Act.

SA 4658. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 9, line 20, insert “(or, in the case of an individual who resides in a community that is not connected by road to a State election office, provides such documentary proof to such office by a means other than in person as specified by the election official)” after “official”.

SA 4659. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 22, insert “, including an Enhanced Tribal Citizenship ID Card” before the period.

SA 4660. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I, insert the following:

SEC. —. GRANTS TO PROVIDE VOTER REGISTRATION SERVICES TO COMMUNITIES THAT ARE NOT CONNECTED BY ROAD TO A STATE ELECTION OFFICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Election Assistance Commission shall make grants to States to provide voter registration services to communities that are not connected by road to a State election office.

(b) AUTHORIZATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated for grants under this section such sums as are necessary for fiscal year 2027 and subsequent years.

SA 4661. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 6, line 13, insert “This subsection and any other provision of this Act relating to the requirement to provide documentary proof of United States citizenship shall not apply with respect to an individual born before December 31, 1960.” after “application.”.

SA 4662. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 29, between lines 7 and 8, insert the following:

(3) NON-APPLICATION OF DOCUMENTARY PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENTS TO CERTAIN STATES.—Section 4 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 20503), as amended by paragraph (2), is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) NON-APPLICATION OF DOCUMENTARY PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENTS TO CERTAIN STATES.—The requirements under subsections (j) and (k) of section 8 and any other provision of this Act relating to the requirement to provide documentary proof of United States citizenship shall not apply with respect to a State which can demonstrate that incidents of noncitizen voting in elections for Federal office are less than 0.05 percent.”.

SA 4663. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 27, line 15, insert “knowing” before “act”.

On page 28, line 2, insert “knowingly” before “providing”.

SA 4664. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 36, line 12, strike “EFFECTIVE DATE.” and insert the following:

“(e) APPLICATION.—The requirements of subsection (a) shall only apply to individuals who registered to vote after the date of the enactment of this section.

“(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

SA 4665. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 35, lines 19 to 20, strike “that includes a photo of the individual and an expiration date”.

SA 4666. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 36, line 12, strike “EFFECTIVE DATE.” and insert the following:

“(e) APPLICATION.—The requirements of subsection (a) shall only apply to individuals born after December 31, 1960.

“(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

SA 4667. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike subtitle C of title I.

SA 4668. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE IV—NO UNFUNDED MANDATES

SEC. 401. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary for the purpose of reimbursing States for carrying out the provisions of and amendments made by this Act.

SA 4669. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE IV—EFFECTIVE DATE

SEC. 401. EFFECTIVE DATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, the provisions of and amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is 4 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) VOTER REGISTRATION.—Section 101 and the amendments made by such section shall take effect on the date that is 4 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to applications for voter registration which are submitted on or after such date.

(c) PHOTO IDENTIFICATION.—Section 303A(e) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002, as added by section 111, is amended to read as follows:

“(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is 4 years after the date of the enactment of this section, and shall apply with respect to elections for Federal office held on or after such date.”.

(d) ABSENTEE VOTING.—Subtitle C of title I shall apply with respect to elections for Federal office occurring after the date that is 4 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 101(r), 111(d), and 129 are repealed.

SA 4670. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . FEE EXEMPTION FOR NATURALIZATION APPLICATIONS OF CERTAIN NATIONALS FROM OUTLYING POSSESSIONS.

Section 325 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1436) is amended—

(1) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(2) by striking “except that in applications” and inserting “except that—

“(1) in an application”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) no fee shall be charged or collected from the applicant for the filing of such an application or for the issuance of a certificate of naturalization upon being granted United States citizenship.”.

SA 4671. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PRIVATE RIGHTS OF ACTION REGARDING VOTING.

(a) AMENDMENT TO THE REVISED STATUTES.—Section 2004(c) of the Revised Statutes (52 U.S.C. 10101(c)), is amended by inserting “an aggrieved person may institute, or” before “the Attorney General”.

(b) AMENDMENTS TO THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965.—The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 10(b), by inserting “an aggrieved person may institute, and” before “the Attorney General”;

(2) in section 12(d), by inserting “an aggrieved person may institute, or” before “the Attorney General”;

(3) in section 204—

(A) by striking “the Attorney General has reason to believe” and inserting “there are reasonable grounds to believe”; and

(B) by striking “he may institute” and inserting “an aggrieved person may institute, or the Attorney General may institute”; and

(4) in section 301(a)(1), by striking “The Attorney General is directed” and inserting “An aggrieved person may institute, and the Attorney General is directed”.

SA 4672. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . CRITERIA FOR COVERAGE OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.

(a) DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO SECTION 4(a).—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4(b) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303(b)) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO REQUIREMENTS.—

“(1) EXISTENCE OF VOTING RIGHTS VIOLATIONS DURING PREVIOUS 25 YEARS.—

“(A) STATEWIDE APPLICATION.—Subsection (a) applies with respect to a State and all political subdivisions within the State during a calendar year if—

“(i) fifteen or more voting rights violations occurred in the State during the previous 25 calendar years; or

“(ii) ten or more voting rights violations occurred in the State during the previous 25 calendar years, at least one of which was committed by the State itself (as opposed to a political subdivision within the State).

“(B) APPLICATION TO SPECIFIC POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.—Subsection (a) applies with respect to a political subdivision as a separate unit during a calendar year if three or more voting rights violations occurred in the subdivision during the previous 25 calendar years.

“(2) PERIOD OF APPLICATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), if, pursuant to paragraph (1), subsection (a) applies with respect to a State or political subdivision during a calendar year, subsection (a) shall apply with respect to such State or political subdivision for the period—

“(i) that begins on January 1 of the year in which subsection (a) applies; and

“(ii) that ends on the date which is 10 years after the date described in clause (i).

“(B) NO FURTHER APPLICATION AFTER DECLARATORY JUDGMENT.—

“(i) STATES.—If a State obtains a declaratory judgment under subsection (a), and the judgment remains in effect, subsection (a) shall no longer apply to such State and all political subdivisions in the State pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) unless, after the issuance of the declaratory judgment, paragraph (1)(A) applies to the State solely on the basis of voting rights violations occurring after the issuance of the declaratory judgment, or paragraph (1)(B) applies to the political subdivision solely on the basis of voting rights violations occurring after the issuance of the declaratory judgment.

“(ii) POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.—If a political subdivision obtains a declaratory judgment under subsection (a), and the judgment remains in effect, subsection (a) shall no longer apply to such political subdivision pursuant to paragraph (1), including pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) (relating to the statewide application of subsection (a)), unless, after the issuance of the declaratory judgment, paragraph (1)(B) applies to the political subdivision solely on the basis of voting rights violations occurring after the issuance of the declaratory judgment.

“(3) DETERMINATION OF VOTING RIGHTS VIOLATION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), a voting rights violation occurred in a State or political subdivision if any of the following applies:

“(A) JUDICIAL RELIEF; VIOLATION OF THE 14TH OR 15TH AMENDMENT.—Any final judgment (that has not been reversed on appeal) occurred, in which the plaintiff prevailed and in which any court of the United States determined that a denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group occurred, that a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting created an undue burden on the right to vote in connection with a claim that the law unduly burdened voters of a particular race, color, or language minority group, or that race was the predominant factor motivating the decision to place a significant number of voters within or outside of a particular district, unless narrowly tailored in service of a compelling interest or in response to an objection interposed by the Department of Justice, in violation of the 14th or 15th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, anywhere within the State or subdivision.

“(B) JUDICIAL RELIEF; VIOLATIONS OF THIS ACT.—Any final judgment (that has not been reversed on appeal) occurred in which the plaintiff prevailed and in which any court of the United States determined that a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting was imposed or applied anywhere within the State or subdivision in a manner that resulted or would have resulted in a denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, in violation of subsection (e) or (f) or section 2, 201, or 203, or any final judgment (that has not been reversed on appeal) occurred in which a court of the United States found a State or political subdivision failed to comply with section 5(a): *Provided*, That if the voting qualifications or prerequisites to voting or standards, practices, or procedures that the court finds required compliance with section 5(a) subsequently go into effect (without alteration or amendment) in ac-

cordance with the procedures in section 5(a), then such finding shall not count as a violation.

“(C) FINAL JUDGMENT; DENIAL OF DECLARATORY JUDGMENT.—In a final judgment (that has not been reversed on appeal), any court of the United States has denied the request of the State or subdivision for a declaratory judgment under section 3(c) or section 5, and thereby prevented a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting from being enforced anywhere within the State or subdivision.

“(D) OBJECTION BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The Attorney General has interposed an objection under section 3(c) or section 5, and thereby prevented a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting from being enforced anywhere within the State or subdivision. A violation under this subparagraph has not occurred where an objection has been withdrawn by the Attorney General, unless the withdrawal was in response to a change in the law or practice that served as the basis of the objection. A violation under this subparagraph has not occurred where the objection is based solely on a State or political subdivision's failure to comply with a procedural process that would not otherwise count as an independent violation of this Act.

“(E) CONSENT DECREE, SETTLEMENT, OR OTHER AGREEMENT.—

“(i) AGREEMENT.—A consent decree, settlement, or other agreement was adopted or entered by a court of the United States that contains an admission of liability by the defendants, which resulted in the alteration or abandonment of a voting practice anywhere in the territory of such State or subdivision that was challenged on the ground that the practice denied or abridged the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group in violation of subsection (e) or (f) or section 2, 201, or 203, or the 14th or 15th Amendment.

“(ii) INDEPENDENT VIOLATIONS.—A voluntary extension or continuation of a consent decree, settlement, or agreement described in clause (i) shall not count as an independent violation under this subparagraph. Any other extension or modification of such a consent decree, settlement, or agreement, if the consent decree, settlement, or agreement has been in place for ten years or longer, shall count as an independent violation under this subparagraph. If a court of the United States finds that a consent decree, settlement, or agreement described in clause (i) itself denied or abridged the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, violated subsection (e) or (f) or section 2, 201, or 203, or created an undue burden on the right to vote in connection with a claim that the consent decree, settlement, or other agreement unduly burdened voters of a particular race, color, or language minority group, that finding shall count as an independent violation under this subparagraph.

“(F) MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS.—Each instance in which a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, including each redistricting plan, is found to be a violation by a court of the United States pursuant to subparagraph (A) or (B), or prevented from being enforced pursuant to subparagraph (C) or (D), or altered or abandoned pursuant to subparagraph (E) shall count as an independent violation under this paragraph. Within a redistricting plan, each violation under this paragraph found to violate the rights of any group of voters within an indi-

vidual district based on race, color, or language minority group shall count as an independent violation under this paragraph.

“(4) TIMING OF DETERMINATIONS.—

“(A) DETERMINATIONS OF VOTING RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.—As early as practicable during each calendar year, the Attorney General shall make the determinations required by this subsection, including updating the list of voting rights violations occurring in each State and political subdivision for the previous calendar year.

“(B) EFFECTIVE UPON PUBLICATION IN FEDERAL REGISTER.—A determination or certification of the Attorney General under this section or under section 8 or 13 shall be effective upon publication in the Federal Register.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 4(a) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10303(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the first sentence of the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “any State with respect to which” and all that follows through “unless” and inserting “any State to which this subsection applies during a calendar year pursuant to determinations made under subsection (b), or in any political subdivision of such State (as such subdivision existed on the date such determinations were made with respect to such State), though such determinations were not made with respect to such subdivision as a separate unit, or in any political subdivision with respect to which this subsection applies during a calendar year pursuant to determinations made with respect to such subdivision as a separate unit under subsection (b), unless”;

(B) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking the second sentence;

(C) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “(in the case of a State or subdivision seeking a declaratory judgment under the second sentence of this subsection)”;

(D) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “(in the case of a State or subdivision seeking a declaratory judgment under the second sentence of this subsection)”;

(E) in paragraph (3), by striking “(in the case of a State or subdivision seeking a declaratory judgment under the second sentence of this subsection)”;

(F) in paragraph (5), by striking “(in the case of a State or subdivision which sought a declaratory judgment under the second sentence of this subsection)”;

(G) by striking paragraphs (7) and (8); and

(H) by redesignating paragraph (9) as paragraph (7).

(b) CLARIFICATION OF TREATMENT OF MEMBERS OF LANGUAGE MINORITY GROUPS.—Section 4(a)(1) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10303(a)(1)), as amended by subsection (a), is further amended, in the first sentence, by striking “race or color,” and inserting “race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees of subsection (f)(2).”.

(c) FACILITATING BAILOUT.—Section 4(a) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303(a)), as amended by subsection (a), is further amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1)(C);

(2) by inserting at the beginning of paragraph (7), as redesignated by subsection (a)(2)(H), the following: “Any plaintiff seeking a declaratory judgment under this subsection on the grounds that the plaintiff meets the requirements of paragraph (1) may request that the Attorney General consent to entry of judgment.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) If a political subdivision is subject to the application of this subsection, due to the applicability of subsection (b)(1)(A), the political subdivision may seek a declaratory judgment under this section if the subdivision demonstrates that the subdivision

meets the criteria established by the subparagraphs of paragraph (1), for the 10 years preceding the date on which subsection (a) applied to the political subdivision under subsection (b)(1)(A).

“(9) If a political subdivision was not subject to the application of this subsection by reason of a declaratory judgment entered prior to the date of enactment of this paragraph, and is not, subsequent to that date of enactment, subject to the application of this subsection under subsection (b)(1)(B), then that political subdivision shall not be subject to the requirements of this subsection.”.

SEC. ____ . DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE FOR COVERED PRACTICES.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.) is further amended by inserting after section 4 the following:

“SEC. 4A. DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE FOR COVERED PRACTICES.

“(a) PRACTICE-BASED PRECLEARANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State and each political subdivision shall—

“(A) identify any change to a law, regulation, or policy that includes a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or a standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, that is a covered practice described in subsection (b); and

“(B) ensure that no such covered practice is implemented unless or until the State or political subdivision, as the case may be, complies with subsection (c).

“(2) DETERMINATIONS OF CHARACTERISTICS OF VOTING-AGE POPULATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—As early as practicable during each calendar year, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Director of the Bureau of the Census and the heads of other relevant offices of the government, shall make the determinations required by this section regarding voting-age populations and the characteristics of such populations, and shall publish a list of the States and political subdivisions to which a voting-age population characteristic described in subsection (b) applies.

“(B) PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER.—A determination (including a certification) of the Attorney General under this paragraph shall be effective upon publication in the Federal Register.

“(b) COVERED PRACTICES.—To assure that the right of citizens of the United States to vote is not denied or abridged on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group as a result of the implementation of certain qualifications or prerequisites to voting, or standards, practices, or procedures with respect to voting in a State or political subdivision, the following shall be covered practices subject to the requirements described in subsection (a):

“(1) CHANGES TO METHOD OF ELECTION.—Any change to the method of election—

“(A) to add seats elected at-large in a State or political subdivision where—

“(i) two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or more of the voting-age population in the State or political subdivision, respectively; or

“(ii) a single language minority group represents 20 percent or more of the voting-age population on Indian lands located in whole or in part in the State or political subdivision; or

“(B) to convert one or more seats elected from a single-member district to one or more at-large seats or seats from a multi-member district in a State or political subdivision where—

“(i) two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or

more of the voting-age population in the State or political subdivision, respectively; or

“(ii) a single language minority group represents 20 percent or more of the voting-age population on Indian lands located in whole or in part in the State or political subdivision.

“(2) CHANGES TO POLITICAL SUBDIVISION BOUNDARIES.—Any change or series of changes within a year to the boundaries of a political subdivision that reduces by 3 or more percentage points the percentage of the political subdivision’s voting-age population that is comprised of members of a single racial group or language minority group in the political subdivision where—

“(A) two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or more of the political subdivision’s voting-age population; or

“(B) a single language minority group represents 20 percent or more of the voting-age population on Indian lands located in whole or in part in the political subdivision.

“(3) CHANGES THROUGH REDISTRICTING.—Any change to the apportionment or boundaries of districts for Federal, State, or local elections in a State or political subdivision where any racial group or language minority group that is not the largest racial group or language minority group in the jurisdiction and that represents 15 percent or more of the State or political subdivision’s voting-age population experiences a population increase of at least 20 percent of its voting-age population, over the preceding decade (as calculated by the Bureau of the Census under the most recent decennial census), in the jurisdiction.

“(4) CHANGES IN DOCUMENTATION OR QUALIFICATIONS TO VOTE.—Any change to requirements for documentation or proof of identity to vote or register to vote in elections for Federal, State, or local offices that will exceed or be more stringent than such requirements under State law on the day before the date of enactment of this section.

“(5) CHANGES TO MULTILINGUAL VOTING MATERIALS.—Any change that reduces multilingual voting materials or alters the manner in which such materials are provided or distributed, where no similar reduction or alteration occurs in materials provided in English for such election.

“(6) CHANGES THAT REDUCE, CONSOLIDATE, OR RELOCATE VOTING LOCATIONS, OR REDUCE VOTING OPPORTUNITIES.—Any change that reduces, consolidates, or relocates voting locations in elections for Federal, State, or local office, including early, absentee, and election-day voting locations, or reduces days or hours of in-person voting on any Sunday during a period occurring prior to the date of an election for Federal, State, or local office during which voters may cast ballots in such election, if the location change, or reduction in days or hours, applies—

“(A) in one or more census tracts in which two or more language minority groups or racial groups each represent 20 percent or more of the voting-age population; or

“(B) on Indian lands in which at least 20 percent of the voting-age population belongs to a single language minority group.

“(7) NEW LIST MAINTENANCE PROCESS.—Any change to the maintenance process for voter registration lists that adds a new basis for removal from the list of active voters registered to vote in elections for Federal, State, or local office, or that incorporates new sources of information in determining a voter’s eligibility to vote in elections for Federal, State, or local office, if such a change would have a statistically significant disparate impact, concerning the removal from voter rolls, on members of racial groups or language minority groups that constitute

greater than 5 percent of the voting-age population—

“(A) in the case of a political subdivision imposing such change if—

“(i) two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or more of the voting-age population of the political subdivision; or

“(ii) a single language minority group represents 20 percent or more of the voting-age population on Indian lands located in whole or in part in the political subdivision; or

“(B) in the case of a State imposing such change, if two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or more of the voting-age population of—

“(i) the State; or

“(ii) a political subdivision in the State, except that the requirements under subsections (a) and (c) shall apply only with respect to each such political subdivision individually.

“(c) PRECLEARANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—

“(A) ACTION.—Whenever a State or political subdivision with respect to which the requirements set forth in subsection (a) are in effect shall enact, adopt, or seek to implement any covered practice described under subsection (b), such State or subdivision may institute an action in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia for a declaratory judgment that such covered practice neither has the purpose nor will have the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, and unless and until the court enters such judgment such covered practice shall not be implemented.

“(B) SUBMISSION TO ATTORNEY GENERAL.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), such covered practice may be implemented without such proceeding if the covered practice has been submitted by the chief legal officer or other appropriate official of such State or subdivision to the Attorney General and the Attorney General has not interposed an objection within 60 days after such submission, or upon good cause shown, to facilitate an expedited approval within 60 days after such submission, the Attorney General has affirmatively indicated that such objection will not be made. An exigency, including a natural disaster, inclement weather, or other unforeseeable event, requiring a changed qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure within 30 days of a Federal, State, or local election shall constitute good cause requiring the Attorney General to expedite consideration of the submission. To the extent feasible, expedited consideration shall consider the views of individuals affected by the changed qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure.

“(ii) EFFECT OF INDICATION.—Neither an affirmative indication by the Attorney General that no objection will be made, nor the Attorney General’s failure to object, nor a declaratory judgment entered under this subsection shall bar a subsequent action to enjoin implementation of such covered practice. In the event the Attorney General affirmatively indicates that no objection will be made within the 60-day period following receipt of a submission, the Attorney General may reserve the right to reexamine the submission if additional information comes to the Attorney General’s attention during the remainder of the 60-day period which would otherwise require objection in accordance with this subsection.

“(C) COURT.—Any action under this subsection shall be heard and determined by a court of three judges in accordance with the provisions of section 2284 of title 28, United

States Code, and any appeal shall lie to the Supreme Court.

“(2) DENYING OR ABRIDGING THE RIGHT TO VOTE.—Any covered practice described in subsection (b) that has the purpose of or will have the effect of diminishing the ability of any citizens of the United States on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, to elect their preferred candidates of choice denies or abridges the right to vote within the meaning of paragraph (1).

“(3) PURPOSE DEFINED.—The term ‘purpose’ in paragraphs (1) and (2) shall include any discriminatory purpose.

“(4) PURPOSE OF PARAGRAPH (2).—The purpose of paragraph (2) is to protect the ability of such citizens to elect their preferred candidates of choice.

“(d) ENFORCEMENT.—The Attorney General or any aggrieved citizen may file an action in a district court of the United States to compel any State or political subdivision to satisfy the obligations set forth in this section. Such an action shall be heard and determined by a court of three judges under section 2284 of title 28, United States Code. In any such action, the court shall provide as a remedy that implementation of any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, that is the subject of the action under this subsection be enjoined unless the court determines that—

“(1) the voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, is not a covered practice described in subsection (b); or

“(2) the State or political subdivision has complied with subsection (c) with respect to the covered practice at issue.

“(e) COUNTING OF RACIAL GROUPS AND LANGUAGE MINORITY GROUPS.—For purposes of this section, the calculation of the population of a racial group or a language minority group shall be carried out using the methodology in the guidance of the Department of Justice entitled ‘Guidance Concerning Redistricting Under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act; Notice’ (76 Fed. Reg. 7470 (February 9, 2011)).

“(f) SPECIAL RULE.—For purposes of determinations under this section, any data provided by the Bureau of the Census, whether based on estimation from a sample or actual enumeration, shall not be subject to challenge or review in any court.

“(g) MULTILINGUAL VOTING MATERIALS.—In this section, the term ‘multilingual voting materials’ means registration or voting notices, forms, instructions, assistance, or other materials or information relating to the electoral process, including ballots, provided in the language or languages of one or more language minority groups.”.

SA 4673. Mr. GALLEGO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . TREATMENT OF LICENSES RELATING TO THE SALE OF IRANIAN OIL.

On and after the date of the enactment of this Act, any license issued by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury after the initiation of hostilities with Iran on February 28, 2026, relating to the sale of Iranian oil shall have no force or effect.

SA 4674. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 1, insert the following:

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that the Election Fraud Database maintained by the Heritage Foundation, a conservative policy research organization, documents fewer than 70 verified cases of noncitizens voting over a 40-year period, representing .0001 percent of over 1,000,000,000 votes cast during that time period – a statistically negligible proportion of votes.

SA 4675. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 1, insert the following:

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that, according to the Cato Institute, a libertarian policy research organization, investigations conducted into the integrity of elections have found that voting by noncitizens in the United States elections is virtually nonexistent.

SA 4676. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 1, insert the following:

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that Joseph R. Biden, Jr. received a majority of votes in the 2020 presidential election, as certified by the Electoral College on January 7, 2021, and was duly elected the 46th President of the United States in accordance with the Constitution and all relevant laws. Courts of law, State election officials, and the United States Department of Justice found no evidence of fraud sufficient to affect the outcome of the 2020 election.

SA 4677. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . DOCUMENTARY PROOF OF UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP OR STATUS AS AN ALIEN REQUIRED FOR FIREARM PURCHASES.

Section 922 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(aa) DOCUMENTARY PROOF OF UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP OR STATUS AS AN ALIEN REQUIRED FOR FIREARM PURCHASES.—It shall be unlawful for any person to sell or otherwise dispose of a firearm to any individual unless the individual—

“(1) presents documentary proof of United States citizenship, as defined in section 3 of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (52 U.S.C. 20502);

“(2) if the individual is an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence (as defined in section 101(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a))), presents—

“(A) documentary evidence of status as an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, such as a permanent resident card (Form I-551); and

“(B) a separate document showing proof of residency; or

“(3) if the individual is an alien who has been lawfully admitted to the United States under a nonimmigrant visa and who meets one of the criteria under subsection (y)(2), presents—

“(A) a document showing proof of residency;

“(B) a document containing photo identification; and

“(C) documentation sufficient to establish that the individual is an alien who has been lawfully admitted to the United States under a nonimmigrant visa and who meets one of the criteria under subsection (y)(2).”.

SA 4678. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 8, line 6, strike “or” at the end.

On page 8, line 15, strike the period at the end and insert “; or”.

On page 8, between lines 15 and 16, insert the following:

“(C) if the applicant lives at least 50 miles from the nearest passport acceptance facility, the applicant presents documentary proof of United States citizenship by mail or online.”.

SA 4679. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 25, line 3, strike “(r)” and insert the following:

(r) EXEMPTION FROM PASSPORT FEES.—Section 1(a)(2) of the Passport Act of June 4, 1920 (22 U.S.C. 214(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (E)(ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(F) any person who is applying for or renewing a passport on or after the date of the enactment of the SAVE America Act in order to present documentary proof of United States citizenship pursuant to section 4(b) or 6(e) of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (52 U.S.C. 20503(b) and 20505(e)).”.

(s)

SA 4680. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Fraudulent Artificial Intelligence Regulations (FAIR) Elections Act of 2026”.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON FALSE AI-GENERATED ELECTION MEDIA.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) **APPLICABLE FEDERAL ELECTION.**—The term “applicable Federal election” means any general, primary, runoff, or special election held solely or in part for the purpose of nominating or electing a candidate for the office of President, Vice President, Presidential elector, Member of the Senate, Member of the House of Representatives, or Delegate or Commissioner from a Territory or possession.

(2) **ELECTION OFFICIAL.**—The term “election official” means any individual legally authorized to perform duties in connection with an applicable Federal election, including workers, volunteers, poll workers, and authorized poll observers.

(3) **FALSE AI-GENERATED ELECTION MEDIA.**—The term “false AI-generated election media” means text, image, audio, or video that—

(A) is the product of a computational process that uses machine learning, natural language processing, artificial intelligence techniques, or other computational processing techniques of similar or greater complexity; and

(B) either—

(i) contains materially false information relating to—

(I) the time, place, or manner of holding any applicable Federal election; or

(II) the qualifications for or restrictions on voter eligibility for any such election; or

(ii) falsely depicts an election official.

(b) **PROHIBITION.**—Except as provided in subsection (c), a person may not—

(1) knowingly distribute false AI-generated election media described in subsection (a)(3)(B)(i) if such person—

(A) knows such media contains materially false information described in such subsection; and

(B) has the purpose of impeding or preventing another person from exercising the right to vote in an applicable Federal election; or

(2) knowingly distribute false AI-generated election media described in subsection (a)(3)(B)(ii) if such person—

(A) knows the depiction of the election official in such media is materially false; and

(B) has the intent to—

(i) intimidate or harass an election official; or

(ii) deter another person from exercising the right to vote in an applicable Federal election.

(c) **INAPPLICABILITY TO CERTAIN ENTITIES.**—This section shall not apply to the following:

(1) A radio or television broadcasting station, a cable or satellite television operator, programmer, or producer, or a streaming service that broadcasts false AI-generated election media prohibited by this section as part of a bona fide newscast, news interview, news documentary, or on-the-spot coverage of bona fide news events, if the broadcast clearly acknowledges through content or a disclosure, in a manner that can be easily heard or read by the average listener or viewer, that the information contained in the media and described in subsection (a)(2)(B) is false.

(2) A regularly published newspaper, magazine, or other periodical of general circulation, including an internet or electronic publication, that routinely carries news and commentary of general interest, and that publishes false AI-generated election media prohibited under this section, if the publication clearly states that the information contained in the media and described in subsection (a)(2)(B) is false.

(d) **ENFORCEMENT.**—The Attorney General may bring a civil action against any person who violates subsection (b) in an appropriate United States District Court for such declaratory and injunctive relief (including a tem-

porary restraining order, a permanent or temporary injunction, or other order).

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON REMOVAL OF NAMES FROM VOTING ROLLS USING UNVERIFIED VOTER CHALLENGE DATABASES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (52 U.S.C. 20501 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 8 the following new section:

“SEC. 8A. RESTRICTIONS ON REMOVAL OF VOTERS FROM OFFICIAL LISTS OF VOTERS.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—A State may not remove the name of any registrant from the official list of voters eligible to vote in elections for Federal office or take any action with respect to a voter eligibility challenge unless the registrant or voter is determined to be ineligible to vote based on—

“(1) source information received from governmental entities and obtained by such entities in the course of carrying out official actions or duties; and

“(2) source information approved by the Attorney General as sufficient to protect the integrity and completeness of voter registration lists.

“(b) APPROVAL OF VOTER INFORMATION DATA.—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Attorney General, in consultation with the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the members of the Election Assistance Commission, may approve source information under subsection (a)(3) if such information meets the following requirements:

“(A) The source information contains qualifying data sets that allow the State match the individual identified by the source information with an individual on the official list of voters eligible to vote in elections for Federal office.

“(B) The source information is updated not less than a monthly.

“(C) The source information was not obtained in violation of section 1030 of title 18, United States Code (commonly known as the ‘Computer Fraud and Abuse Act’).

“(2) **QUALIFYING DATA SETS.**—For purposes of paragraph (1)(A), the term ‘qualifying data sets’ means the following sets of data with respect to an individual:

“(A) Last name, first name, and full social security number.

“(B) Last name, first name, and driver’s license or other unique identifying number assigned by the State.

“(C) Last name, first name, last four digits of a social security number, and date of birth.

“(D) Last name, full social security number, and date of birth.

“(c) **COORDINATION WITH OTHER METHODS.**—Nothing in this section be construed to preclude—

“(1) the removal of names from official lists of voters on a basis described in paragraph (3) (A) or (B) or (4)(A) of section 8(a);

“(2) the removal of names from official lists of voters on a basis described in section 8(c); or

“(3) correction of registration records pursuant to this Act.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 8(a) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 20507(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “provide” and inserting “subject to section 8A, provide”; and

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking “conduct” and inserting “subject to section 8A, conduct”.

SEC. 4. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act, or an amendment made by this Act, or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance, is held to be invalid, the remainder of this Act, or an amendment made by

this Act, or the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected.

SA 4681. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “End Crypto Corruption Act of 2026”.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITED FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 131 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SUBCHAPTER IV—PROHIBITED FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

“§ 13151. Definitions

“In this subchapter:

“(1) **COVERED INDIVIDUAL.**—The term ‘covered individual’ means—

“(A) the President;

“(B) the Vice President;

“(C) a Member of Congress;

“(D) an individual appointed to a Senate-confirmed position; or

“(E) a special Government employee (as defined in section 202 of title 18) associated with the Executive Office of the President.

“(2) **DEPENDENT CHILD; MEMBER OF CONGRESS.**—The terms ‘dependent child’ and ‘Member of Congress’ have the meanings given those terms in section 13101.

“(3) **DIRECTLY.**—The term ‘directly’ means by virtue of the ownership or beneficial interest of a covered individual, or the spouse or dependent child of a covered individual, in a financial interest described in paragraph (5)(A).

“(4) **INDIRECTLY.**—The term ‘indirectly’ means by virtue of the financial interest of a covered individual, or the spouse or dependent child of a covered individual, in a business entity, partnership interest, company, investment fund, trust, or other third party in which the covered individual, or the spouse or dependent child of a covered individual, has an ownership or beneficial interest.

“(5) **PROHIBITED FINANCIAL TRANSACTION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘prohibited financial transaction’ means—

“(i) any issuance, sponsorship, or endorsement of a cryptocurrency, meme coin, token, non-fungible token, stablecoin, or other digital asset that is sold for remuneration;

“(ii) any financial interest comparable to an interest described in clause (i) that is acquired through synthetic means, such as the use of a derivative, including an option, warrant, or other similar means; or

“(iii) any financial interest comparable to an interest described in clause (i) that is acquired as part of an aggregation or compilation of such interests through a mutual fund, exchange-traded fund, or other similar means.

“(B) **EXCLUSIONS.**—The term ‘prohibited financial transaction’ does not include the mere purchase, sale, holding, or other conduct relating to financial instruments or assets routinely accessible to any member of the public.

“(6) **SENATE-CONFIRMED POSITION.**—The term ‘Senate-confirmed position’ means a position in a department or agency of the executive branch of the United States for which appointment is required to be made by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

§ 13152. Prohibition on certain transactions

“(a) PROHIBITION.—Except as provided in subsection (b), a covered individual, or the spouse or dependent child of a covered individual, may not engage directly or indirectly in a prohibited financial transaction—

“(1) during the term of service of the covered individual; or

“(2) during the 1-year period beginning on the date on which the service of the covered individual is terminated.

“(b) LIABILITY AND IMMUNITY.—For purposes of any immunities to civil liability, any conduct relating to a prohibited financial transaction under this section shall be deemed an unofficial act and beyond the scope of the official duties of the relevant covered individual.

§ 13153. Civil penalties

“(a) CIVIL ACTION.—The Attorney General may bring a civil action in any appropriate district court of the United States against any covered individual who violates section 13152(a).

“(b) CIVIL PENALTY.—Any covered individual who knowingly violates section 13152(a) shall be subject to a civil monetary penalty equal to not more than 10 percent of the value of the financial interest that is the subject of the prohibited conduct, or the amount of financial gain, if any, that the covered individual benefitted from relating to the prohibited conduct, whichever is greater.

“(c) DISGORGEMENT.—A covered individual who is found to have violated section 13152(a) in a civil action under subsection (a) shall disgorge to the Treasury of the United States any profit from the prohibited conduct that is the subject of that civil action.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 131 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SUBCHAPTER IV—PROHIBITED FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

“13151. Definitions.

“13152. Prohibition on certain transactions.

“13153. Civil penalties.”.

SEC. 3. CRIMINAL PENALTIES RELATING TO PROHIBITED FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 11 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

§ 227A. Prohibited financial transactions

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COVERED INDIVIDUAL.—The term ‘covered individual’ means—

“(A) the President;

“(B) the Vice President;

“(C) a Member of Congress;

“(D) an individual appointed to a Senate-confirmed position; or

“(E) a special Government employee (as defined in section 202) associated with the Executive Office of the President.

“(2) MEMBER OF CONGRESS.—The term ‘Member of Congress’ has the meaning given that term in section 13101 of title 5.

“(3) PROHIBITED FINANCIAL TRANSACTION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘prohibited financial transaction’ means—

“(i) any issuance, sponsorship, or endorsement of a cryptocurrency, meme coin, token, non-fungible token, stablecoin, or other digital asset that is sold for remuneration; or

“(ii) any financial interest comparable to an interest described in clause (i) that is acquired through synthetic means, such as the use of a derivative, including an option, warrant, or other similar means.

“(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ‘prohibited financial transaction’ does not include the mere purchase, sale, holding, or other conduct relating to financial instruments or as-

sets routinely accessible to any member of the public.

“(4) SENATE-CONFIRMED POSITION.—The term ‘Senate-confirmed position’ means a position in a department or agency of the executive branch of the United States for which appointment is required to be made by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

“(b) BENEFITTING FROM PROHIBITED FINANCIAL TRANSACTION.—Any covered individual who—

“(1) knowingly violates any provision of section 13152(a) of title 5; and

“(2) through such violation—

“(A) causes an aggregate loss of not less than \$1,000,000 to 1 or more persons in the United States; or

“(B) benefits financially, through profit, gain, or advantage, directly or indirectly through any family member or business associate of the covered individual, from the sale, purchase, or distribution of the financial interest described in subsection (a)(3)(A)(i) issued, sponsored, or endorsed in violation of section 13152(a) of title 5, shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.

“(c) BRIBERY.—Any covered individual who—

“(1) knowingly violates any provision of section 13152(a) of title 5; and

“(2) directly or indirectly, corruptly demands, seeks, receives, accepts, or agrees to receive or accept any thing of value personally or for any other person or entity, in return for—

“(A) being influenced in the performance of any official act;

“(B) being influenced to commit or aid in committing, or to collude in, or allow, any fraud, or make opportunity for the commission of any fraud, on the United States; or

“(C) being induced to do or omit to do any act in violation of the official duty of such official or person, shall be fined under this title or not more than 2 times the monetary equivalent of the thing of value, whichever is greater, or imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both, and may be disqualified from holding any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States.

“(d) INTENT.—To incur criminal liability under this section, it shall not be required that a covered individual intended to create a financial interest described in subsection (a)(3)(A)(i) through the issuance, sponsorship or endorsement of the financial interest described in subsection (a)(3)(A)(i).

“(e) LIABILITY AND IMMUNITY.—For purposes of any immunities to civil and criminal liability, any conduct relating to a prohibited financial transaction under this section shall be deemed an unofficial act and beyond the scope of official duties of the relevant covered individual.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 11 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 227 the following:

“227A. Prohibited financial transactions.”.

SA 4682. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. BAN ON TRADING EVENT CONTRACTS BY CERTAIN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

Section 5c of the Commodity Exchange Act (7 U.S.C. 7a-2) is amended by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

“(d) BAN ON TRADING EVENT CONTRACTS BY CERTAIN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) COVERED INDIVIDUAL.—The term ‘covered individual’ means—

“(i) the President;

“(ii) the Vice President; and

“(iii) a Member of Congress.

“(B) EVENT CONTRACT.—The term ‘event contract’ means an agreement, contract, transaction, or swap in an excluded commodity that is based on an occurrence, extent of an occurrence of, or contingency.

“(C) MATERIAL NONPUBLIC INFORMATION.—The term ‘material nonpublic information’ means information—

“(i) that a reasonable investor would consider important in making a decision regarding purchasing, selling, or otherwise exchanging an agreement or contract in a commodity or a commodity for future delivery; and

“(ii) that is not publicly available.

“(D) MEMBER OF CONGRESS.—The term ‘Member of Congress’ has the meaning given the term in section 13101 of title 5, United States Code.

“(E) SENIOR EXECUTIVE BRANCH OFFICIAL.—The term ‘senior executive branch official’ means any officer or employee described in any of paragraphs (3) through (8) of section 13103(f) of title 5, United States Code.

“(2) BAN ON TRADING EVENT CONTRACTS.—

“(A) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—No covered individual may purchase, sell, or otherwise exchange an event contract.

“(B) SENIOR EXECUTIVE BRANCH OFFICIALS.—No senior executive branch official may purchase, sell, or otherwise exchange an event contract the subject of which is a matter in which the senior executive branch official participates personally and substantially as a Government officer or employee, through decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, the rendering of advice, investigation, or otherwise, in a judicial or other proceeding, application, request for a ruling or other determination, contract, claim, controversy, charge, accusation, arrest, or other particular matter.

“(3) CIVIL ACTIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General may bring a civil action in the appropriate United States district court against any individual who engages in conduct in violation of paragraph (2).

“(B) CIVIL PENALTY.—In a civil action under subparagraph (A), if it is demonstrated by a preponderance of the evidence that the individual has violated paragraph (2), the individual shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than the greater of—

“(i) \$10,000 for each violation; and

“(ii) the amount of profit made through the purchase, sale, or exchange of the event contract in violation of paragraph (2).

“(C) NO PRECLUSION OF ALTERNATIVE REMEDIES.—The imposition of a civil penalty under this paragraph does not preclude any other criminal or civil statutory, common law, or administrative remedy that is available by law to the United States or any other person.

“(4) FOREIGN BOARDS OF TRADE.—

“(A) DEFINITION OF FOREIGN BOARD OF TRADE.—In this paragraph, the term ‘foreign board of trade’ means a board of trade that—

“(i) is organized under the laws of a non-United States jurisdiction or has its principal place of business outside the United States; and

“(ii) avails itself of any means or instrumentality of interstate commerce in the conduct of its business as a board of trade.

“(B) QUARTERLY REPORTS.—Each foreign board of trade shall submit to the Commission quarterly reports describing each purchase, sale, or other exchange on the foreign board of trade in violation of paragraph (2).

“(C) ENFORCEMENT.—A foreign board of trade that fails to submit a report required by subparagraph (B) shall be subject to revocation of the registration of the foreign board of trade by the Commission.

“(5) INSIDER TRADING.—The Commission shall issue a rule to restrict the inappropriate use of material nonpublic information, in breach of an express or implied duty not to use or disclose such material nonpublic information, as a means of making a profit through the purchase, sale, or other exchange of an event contract, including by requiring designated contract markets to prohibit the purchase, sale, or other exchange of an event contract by such individuals as the Commission determines to be appropriate in the public interest.”

SA 4683. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Freedom to Vote by Mail Act”.

SEC. 2. VOTING BY MAIL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS.—Subtitle A of title III of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081 et seq.) is amended—

(A) by redesignating sections 305 and 306 as sections 306 and 307, respectively; and

(B) by inserting after section 304 the following new section:

“SEC. 305. PROMOTING ABILITY OF VOTERS TO VOTE BY MAIL.

“(a) UNIFORM AVAILABILITY OF ABSENTEE VOTING TO ALL VOTERS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If an individual in a State is eligible to cast a vote in an election for Federal office, the State may not impose any additional conditions or requirements on the eligibility of the individual to cast the vote in such election by absentee ballot by mail.

“(2) ADMINISTRATION OF VOTING BY MAIL.—

“(A) PROHIBITING IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT AS CONDITION OF OBTAINING OR CASTING BALLOT.—A State may not require an individual to submit any form of identifying document as a condition of obtaining or casting an absentee ballot, except that nothing in this subparagraph may be construed to prevent a State from requiring—

“(i) the information required to complete an application for voter registration for an election for Federal office under section 303(a)(5)(A), provided that a State may not deny a voter a ballot or the opportunity to cast it on the grounds that the voter does not possess a current and valid driver’s license number or a social security number; or

“(ii) a signature of the individual or similar affirmation as a condition of obtaining or casting an absentee ballot.

“(B) PROHIBITING FAULTY MATCHING REQUIREMENTS FOR IDENTIFYING INFORMATION.—A State may not deny a voter an absentee ballot or reject an absentee ballot cast by a voter—

“(i) on the grounds that the voter provided a different form of identifying information

under subparagraph (A) than the voter originally provided when registering to vote or when requesting an absentee ballot; or

“(ii) due to an error in, or omission of, identifying information required by a State under subparagraph (A), if such error or omission is not material to an individual’s eligibility to vote under section 2004(a)(2)(B) of the Revised Statutes (52 U.S.C. 10101(a)(2)(B)).

“(C) PROHIBITING REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE NOTARIZATION OR WITNESS SIGNATURE AS CONDITION OF OBTAINING OR CASTING BALLOT.—A State may not require notarization or witness signature or other formal authentication (other than voter attestation) as a condition of obtaining or casting an absentee ballot, except that nothing in this subparagraph may be construed to prohibit a State from enforcing a law which has a witness signature requirement for a ballot where a voter oath is attested to with a mark rather than a voter’s signature.

“(3) NO EFFECT ON IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST-TIME VOTERS REGISTERING BY MAIL.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to exempt any individual described in paragraph (1) of section 303(b) from meeting the requirements of paragraph (2) of such section.

“(b) DUE PROCESS REQUIREMENTS FOR STATES REQUIRING SIGNATURE VERIFICATION.—

“(1) REQUIREMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A State may not impose a signature verification requirement as a condition of accepting and counting a mail-in ballot or absentee ballot submitted by any individual with respect to an election for Federal office unless the State meets the due process requirements described in paragraph (2).

“(B) SIGNATURE VERIFICATION REQUIREMENT DESCRIBED.—In this subsection, a ‘signature verification requirement’ is a requirement that an election official verify the identification of an individual by comparing the signature of the individual on the mail-in ballot or absentee ballot with the individual’s signature on the official list of registered voters in the State or another official record or other document used by the State to verify the signatures of voters.

“(2) DUE PROCESS REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) NOTICE AND OPPORTUNITY TO CURE DISCREPANCY IN SIGNATURES.—If an individual submits a mail-in ballot or an absentee ballot and the appropriate State or local election official determines that a discrepancy exists between the signature on such ballot and the signature of such individual on the official list of registered voters in the State or other official record or document used by the State to verify the signatures of voters, such election official, prior to making a final determination as to the validity of such ballot, shall—

“(i) as soon as practical, but not later than the next business day after such determination is made, make a good faith effort to notify the individual by mail, telephone, and (if available) text message and electronic mail that—

“(I) a discrepancy exists between the signature on such ballot and the signature of the individual on the official list of registered voters in the State or other official record or document used by the State to verify the signatures of voters; and

“(II) if such discrepancy is not cured prior to the expiration of the third day following the State’s deadline for receiving mail-in ballots or absentee ballots, such ballot will not be counted; and

“(ii) cure such discrepancy and count the ballot if, prior to the expiration of the third day following the State’s deadline for receiving mail-in ballots or absentee ballots, the

individual provides the official with information to cure such discrepancy, either in person, by telephone, or by electronic methods.

“(B) NOTICE AND OPPORTUNITY TO CURE MISSING SIGNATURE OR OTHER DEFECT.—If an individual submits a mail-in ballot or an absentee ballot without a signature or submits a mail-in ballot or an absentee ballot with another defect which, if left uncured, would cause the ballot to not be counted, the appropriate State or local election official, prior to making a final determination as to the validity of the ballot, shall—

“(i) as soon as practical, but not later than the next business day after such determination is made, make a good faith effort to notify the individual by mail, telephone, and (if available) text message and electronic mail that—

“(I) the ballot did not include a signature or has some other defect; and

“(II) if the individual does not provide the missing signature or cure the other defect prior to the expiration of the third day following the State’s deadline for receiving mail-in ballots or absentee ballots, such ballot will not be counted; and

“(ii) count the ballot if, prior to the expiration of the third day following the State’s deadline for receiving mail-in ballots or absentee ballots, the individual provides the official with the missing signature on a form proscribed by the State or cures the other defect.

This subparagraph does not apply with respect to a defect consisting of the failure of a ballot to meet the applicable deadline for the acceptance of the ballot, as described in subsection (e).

“(C) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—An election official may not make a determination that a discrepancy exists between the signature on a mail-in ballot or an absentee ballot and the signature of the individual on the official list of registered voters in the State or other official record or other document used by the State to verify the signatures of voters unless—

“(I) not fewer than 2 election officials make the determination;

“(II) each official who makes the determination has received training in procedures used to verify signatures; and

“(III) of the officials who make the determination, not fewer than 1 is affiliated with the political party whose candidate received the most votes in the most recent statewide election for Federal office held in the State and not fewer than 1 is affiliated with the political party whose candidate received the second most votes in the most recent statewide election for Federal office held in the State.

“(ii) EXCEPTION.—Clause (i)(III) shall not apply to any State in which, under a law that is in effect continuously on and after the date of enactment of this section, determinations regarding signature discrepancies are made by election officials who are not affiliated with a political party.

“(3) REPORT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the end of a Federal election cycle, each chief State election official shall submit to the Commission a report containing the following information for the applicable Federal election cycle in the State:

“(i) The number of ballots invalidated due to a discrepancy under this subsection.

“(ii) Description of attempts to contact voters to provide notice as required by this subsection.

“(iii) Description of the cure process developed by such State pursuant to this subsection, including the number of ballots determined valid as a result of such process.

“(B) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 10 days after receiving a report under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall transmit such report to Congress.

“(C) FEDERAL ELECTION CYCLE DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘Federal election cycle’ means, with respect to any regularly scheduled election for Federal office, the period beginning on the day after the date of the preceding regularly scheduled general election for Federal office and ending on the date of such regularly scheduled general election.

“(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed—

“(A) to prohibit a State from rejecting a ballot attempted to be cast in an election for Federal office by an individual who is not eligible to vote in the election; or

“(B) to prohibit a State from providing an individual with more time and more methods for curing a discrepancy in the individual’s signature, providing a missing signature, or curing any other defect than the State is required to provide under this subsection.

“(C) APPLICATIONS FOR ABSENTEE BALLOTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to such other methods as the State may establish for an individual to apply for an absentee ballot, each State shall permit an individual to submit an application for an absentee ballot online.

“(2) TREATMENT OF WEBSITES.—A State shall be considered to meet the requirements of paragraph (1) if the website of the appropriate State or local election official allows an application for an absentee ballot to be completed and submitted online and if the website permits the individual—

“(A) to print the application so that the individual may complete the application and return it to the official; or

“(B) to request that a paper copy of the application be transmitted to the individual by mail or electronic mail so that the individual may complete the application and return it to the official.

“(3) ENSURING DELIVERY PRIOR TO ELECTION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If an individual who is eligible to vote in an election for Federal office submits an application for an absentee ballot in the election and such application is received by the appropriate State or local election official not later than 13 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) before the date of the election, the election official shall ensure that the ballot and related voting materials are promptly mailed to the individual.

“(B) APPLICATIONS RECEIVED CLOSE TO ELECTION DAY.—If an individual who is eligible to vote in an election for Federal office submits an application for an absentee ballot in the election and such application is received by the appropriate State or local election official after the date described in subparagraph (A) but not later than 7 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) before the date of the election, the election official shall, to the greatest extent practical, ensure that the ballot and related voting materials are mailed to the individual within 1 business day of the receipt of the application.

“(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall preclude a State or local jurisdiction from allowing for the acceptance and processing of absentee ballot applications submitted or received after the date described in subparagraph (B).

“(4) APPLICATION FOR ALL FUTURE ELECTIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—At the option of an individual, the individual’s application to vote by absentee ballot by mail in an election for Federal office shall be treated as an applica-

tion for an absentee ballot by mail in all subsequent elections for Federal office held in the State.

“(B) DURATION OF TREATMENT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an individual who is treated as having applied for an absentee ballot for all subsequent elections for Federal office held in the State under subparagraph (A), such treatment shall remain effective until the earlier of such time as—

“(I) the individual is no longer registered to vote in the State; or

“(II) the individual provides an affirmative written notice revoking such treatment.

“(ii) PROHIBITION ON REVOCATION BASED ON FAILURE TO VOTE.—The treatment of an individual as having applied for an absentee ballot for all subsequent elections held in the State under subparagraph (A) shall not be revoked on the basis that the individual has not voted in an election.

“(d) ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.—Each State shall ensure that all absentee ballot applications, absentee ballots, and related voting materials in elections for Federal office are accessible to individuals with disabilities in a manner that provides the same opportunity for access and participation (including with privacy and independence) as for other voters.

“(e) UNIFORM DEADLINE FOR ACCEPTANCE OF MAILED BALLOTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A State or local election official may not refuse to accept or process a ballot submitted by an individual by mail with respect to an election for Federal office in the State on the grounds that the individual did not meet a deadline for returning the ballot to the appropriate State or local election official if—

“(A) the ballot is postmarked or otherwise indicated by the United States Postal Service to have been mailed on or before the date of the election; and

“(B) the ballot is received by the appropriate election official prior to the expiration of the 7-day period which begins on the date of the election.

“(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit a State from having a law that allows for counting of ballots in an election for Federal office that are received through the mail after the date that is 7 days after the date of the election.

“(f) ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF RETURNING BALLOTS.—In addition to permitting an individual to whom a ballot in an election was provided under this section to return the ballot to an election official by mail, each State shall permit the individual to cast the ballot by delivering the ballot at such times and to such locations as the State may establish, including—

“(1) permitting the individual to deliver the ballot to a polling place within the jurisdiction in which the individual is registered or otherwise eligible to vote on any date on which voting in the election is held at the polling place; and

“(2) permitting the individual to deliver the ballot to a designated ballot drop-off location, a tribally designated building, or the office of a State or local election official.

“(g) BALLOT PROCESSING AND SCANNING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State or jurisdiction shall begin processing and scanning ballots cast by mail for tabulation not later than the date that is 14 days prior to the date of the election involved, except that a State may begin processing and scanning ballots cast by mail for tabulation after such date if the date on which the State begins such processing and scanning ensures, to the greatest extent practical, that ballots cast

before the date of the election are processed and scanned before the date of the election.

“(2) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed—

“(A) to permit a State to tabulate ballots in an election before the closing of the polls on the date of the election unless such tabulation is a necessary component of preprocessing in the State and is performed in accordance with existing State law; or

“(B) to permit an official to make public any results of tabulation and processing before the closing of the polls on the date of the election.

“(h) PROHIBITING RESTRICTIONS ON DISTRIBUTION OF ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS BY THIRD PARTIES.—A State may not prohibit any person from providing an application for an absentee ballot in the election to any individual who is eligible to vote in the election.

“(i) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the authority of States to conduct elections for Federal office through the use of polling places at which individuals cast ballots.

“(j) NO EFFECT ON BALLOTS SUBMITTED BY ABSENT MILITARY AND OVERSEAS VOTERS.—Nothing in this section may be construed to affect the treatment of any ballot submitted by an individual who is entitled to vote by absentee ballot under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (52 U.S.C. 20301 et seq.).

“(k) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply with respect to the regularly scheduled general election for Federal office held in November 2028 and each succeeding election for Federal office.”

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents of such Act is amended—

(A) by redesignating the items relating to sections 305 and 306 as relating to sections 306 and 307, respectively; and

(B) by inserting after the item relating to section 304 the following new item:

“Sec. 305. Promoting ability of voters to vote by mail.”

(b) SAME-DAY PROCESSING OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 34 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 3407. Same-day processing of ballots

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Postal Service shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that any ballot carried by the Postal Service is processed by and cleared from any postal facility or post office on the same day that the ballot is received by that facility or post office.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section—

“(1) the term ‘ballot’ means any ballot transmitted by a voter by mail in an election for Federal office, but does not include any ballot covered by section 3406; and

“(2) the term ‘election for Federal office’ means a general, special, primary, or runoff election for the office of President or Vice President, or of Senator or Representative in, or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to, the Congress.”

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 34 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“3407. Same-day processing of ballots.”

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to absentee ballots relating to an election for Federal office occurring on or after January 1, 2028.

(c) DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE VERIFICATION METHODS.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards, in consultation with the Election Assistance Commission, shall develop standards for the use of alternative methods which could be used in place of signature verification requirements for purposes of verifying the identification of an individual voting by mail-in or absentee ballot in elections for Federal office.

(2) PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards shall solicit comments from the public in the development of standards under paragraph (1).

(3) DEADLINE.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the National Institute of Standards shall publish the standards developed under paragraph (1).

SEC. 3. BALLOTING MATERIALS TRACKING PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS.—Subtitle A of title III of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081 et seq.), as amended by section 2, is amended—

(A) by redesignating sections 306 and 307 as sections 307 and 308, respectively; and

(B) by inserting after section 305 the following new section:

“SEC. 306. BALLOT MATERIALS TRACKING PROGRAM.

“(a) REQUIREMENT.—Each State shall carry out a program to track and confirm the receipt of mail-in ballots and absentee ballots in an election for Federal office under which the State or local election official responsible for the receipt of such voted ballots in the election carries out procedures to track and confirm the receipt of such ballots, and makes information on the receipt of such ballots available to the individual who cast the ballot.

“(b) MEANS OF CARRYING OUT PROGRAM.—A State may meet the requirements of subsection (a)—

“(1) through a program—

“(A) which is established by the State;

“(B) under which the State or local election official responsible for the receipt of voted mail-in ballots and voted absentee ballots in the election—

“(i) carries out procedures to track and confirm the receipt of such ballots; and

“(ii) makes information on the receipt of such ballots available to the individual who cast the ballot; and

“(C) which meets the requirements of subsection (c); or

“(2) through the ballot materials tracking service established under section 3(b) of the Freedom to Vote by Mail Act.

“(c) STATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of this subsection are as follows:

“(1) INFORMATION ON WHETHER VOTE WAS ACCEPTED.—The information referred to under subsection (b)(1)(B)(ii) with respect to the receipt of mail-in ballot or an absentee ballot shall include information regarding whether the vote cast on the ballot was accepted, and, in the case of a vote which was rejected, the reasons therefor.

“(2) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—Information on whether a ballot was accepted or rejected shall be available within 1 business day of the State accepting or rejecting the ballot.

“(3) ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under subparagraph (B), the information provided under the program shall be available by means of online access using the internet site of the State or local election office.

“(B) USE OF TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER BY OFFICIALS WITHOUT INTERNET SITE.—In the

case of a State or local election official whose office does not have an internet site, the program shall require the official to establish a toll-free telephone number that may be used by an individual who cast an absentee ballot to obtain the information required under subsection (b)(1)(B).

“(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply with respect to the regularly scheduled general election for Federal office held in November 2028 and each succeeding election for Federal office.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 102 of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (52 U.S.C. 20302) is amended by striking subsection (h) and redesignating subsection (i) as subsection (h).

(b) BALLOTING MATERIALS TRACKING SERVICE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 1, 2028, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Chair of the Election Assistance Commission, the Postmaster General, the Director of the General Services Administration, the Presidential designee, and State election officials, shall establish a balloting materials tracking service to be used by State and local jurisdictions to inform voters on the status of voter registration applications, absentee ballot applications, absentee ballots, and mail-in ballots.

(2) INFORMATION TRACKED.—The balloting materials tracking service established under paragraph (1) shall provide to a voter the following information with respect to that voter:

(A) In the case of balloting materials sent by mail, tracking information from the United States Postal Service and the Presidential designee on balloting materials sent to the voter and, to the extent feasible, returned by the voter.

(B) The date on which any request by the voter for an application for voter registration or an absentee ballot was received.

(C) The date on which any such requested application was sent to the voter.

(D) The date on which any such completed application was received from the voter and the status of such application.

(E) The date on which any mail-in ballot or absentee ballot was sent to the voter.

(F) The date on which any mail-in ballot or absentee ballot was out for delivery to the voter.

(G) The date on which the post office processes the ballot.

(H) The date on which the returned ballot was out for delivery to the election office.

(I) Whether such ballot was accepted and counted, and in the case of any ballot not counted, the reason why the ballot was not counted. The information described in subparagraph (I) shall be available not later than 1 day after a determination is made on whether or not to accept and count the ballot.

(3) METHOD OF PROVIDING INFORMATION.—The balloting materials tracking service established under paragraph (1) shall allow voters the option to receive the information described in paragraph (2) through email (or other electronic means) or through the mail.

(4) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF LIMITED INFORMATION.—Information described in subparagraphs (E), (G), and (I) of paragraph (2) shall be made available to political parties and voter registration organizations, at cost to cover the expense of providing such information, for use, in accordance with State guidelines and procedures, in helping to return or cure mail-in ballots during any period in which mail-in ballots may be returned.

(5) PROHIBITION ON FEES.—The Director may not charge any fee to a State or jurisdiction for use of the balloting materials tracking service in connection with any Federal, State, or local election.

(6) PRESIDENTIAL DESIGNEE.—For purposes of this subsection, the term “Presidential designee” means the Presidential designee under section 101(a) of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (52 U.S.C. 20301(a)).

(7) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Director such sums as are necessary for purposes of carrying out this subsection.

(c) REIMBURSEMENT FOR COSTS INCURRED BY STATES IN ESTABLISHING PROGRAM.—Subtitle D of title II of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21001 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new part:

“PART 7—PAYMENTS TO REIMBURSE STATES FOR COSTS INCURRED IN ESTABLISHING PROGRAM TO TRACK AND CONFIRM RECEIPT OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS

“SEC. 297. PAYMENTS TO STATES.

“(a) PAYMENTS FOR COSTS OF PROGRAM.—In accordance with this section, the Commission shall make a payment to a State to reimburse the State for the costs incurred in establishing the absentee ballot tracking program under section 306(b)(1) (including costs incurred prior to the date of enactment of this part).

“(b) CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE AND COSTS.—

“(1) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—In order to receive a payment under this section, a State shall submit to the Commission a statement containing—

“(A) a certification that the State has established an absentee ballot tracking program with respect to elections for Federal office held in the State; and

“(B) a statement of the costs incurred by the State in establishing the program.

“(2) AMOUNT OF PAYMENT.—The amount of a payment made to a State under this section shall be equal to the costs incurred by the State in establishing the absentee ballot tracking program, as set forth in the statement submitted under paragraph (1), except that such amount may not exceed the product of—

“(A) the number of jurisdictions in the State which are responsible for operating the program; and

“(B) \$3,000.

“(3) LIMIT ON NUMBER OF PAYMENTS RECEIVED.—A State may not receive more than one payment under this part.

“SEC. 297A. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

“(a) AUTHORIZATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Commission for fiscal year 2028 and each succeeding fiscal year such sums as may be necessary for payments under this part.

“(b) CONTINUING AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Any amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization under this section shall remain available until expended.”.

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents of such Act, as amended by section 2, is amended—

(1) by adding at the end of the items relating to subtitle D of title II the following:

“PART 7—PAYMENTS TO REIMBURSE STATES FOR COSTS INCURRED IN ESTABLISHING PROGRAM TO TRACK AND CONFIRM RECEIPT OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS

“Sec. 297. Payments to States.

“Sec. 297A. Authorization of appropriations.”;

(2) by redesignating the items relating to sections 306 and 307 as relating to sections 307 and 308, respectively; and

(3) by inserting after the item relating to section 305 the following new item:

“Sec. 306. Absentee ballot tracking program.”.

SEC. 4. ELECTION MAIL AND DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) POSTMARK REQUIRED FOR BALLOTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 34 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by section 2(b), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 3408. Postmark required for ballots

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any absentee ballot carried by the Postal Service, the Postal Service shall indicate on the ballot envelope, using a postmark or otherwise—

“(1) the fact that the ballot was carried by the Postal Service; and

“(2) the date on which the ballot was mailed.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section—

“(1) the term ‘absentee ballot’ means any ballot transmitted by a voter by mail in an election for Federal office, but does not include any ballot covered by section 3406; and

“(2) the term ‘election for Federal office’ means a general, special, primary, or runoff election for the office of President or Vice President, or of Senator or Representative in, or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to, the Congress.”

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 34 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by section 1301(b), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“3408. Postmark required for ballots.”

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to absentee ballots relating to an election for Federal office occurring on or after January 1, 2028.

(b) GREATER VISIBILITY FOR BALLOTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A of title III of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081 et seq.), as amended by sections 2 and 3, is amended—

(A) by redesignating sections 307 and 308 as sections 308 and 309, respectively; and

(B) by inserting after section 306 the following new section:

“SEC. 307. BALLOT VISIBILITY.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Each State or local election official shall—

“(1) affix Tag 191, Domestic and International Mail-In Ballots (or any successor tag designated by the United States Postal Service), to any tray or sack of official ballots relating to an election for Federal office that is destined for a domestic or international address;

“(2) use the Official Election Mail logo to designate official ballots relating to an election for Federal office that is destined for a domestic or international address; and

“(3) if an intelligent mail barcode is utilized for any official ballot relating to an election for Federal office that is destined for a domestic or international address, ensure the specific ballot service type identifier for such mail is visible.

“(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The requirements of this section shall apply to elections for Federal office occurring on and after January 1, 2028.”

(2) VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE.—Section 311(b) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 21101(b)) is amended—

(A) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (2);

(B) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (3) and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) in the case of the recommendations with respect to section 307, January 1, 2028.”

(3) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents of such Act, as amended by sections 2 and 3, is amended—

(A) by redesignating the items relating to sections 307 and 308 as relating to sections 308 and 309; and

(B) by inserting after the item relating to section 306 the following new item:

“Sec. 307. Ballot visibility.”

SEC. 5. CARRIAGE OF ELECTION MAIL.

(a) TREATMENT OF ELECTION MAIL.—

(1) TREATMENT AS FIRST-CLASS MAIL; FREE POSTAGE.—Chapter 34 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by sections 2(b) and 4(a), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 3409. Domestic election mail; restriction of operational changes prior to elections

“(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ‘election mail’ means—

“(1) a blank or completed voter registration application form, voter registration card, or similar materials, relating to an election for Federal office;

“(2) a blank or completed absentee and other mail-in ballot completed application form, and a blank or completed absentee or other mail-in ballot, relating to an election for Federal office, and

“(3) other materials relating to an election for Federal office that are mailed by a State or local election official to an individual who is registered to vote.

“(b) CARRIAGE OF ELECTION MAIL.—Election mail (other than balloting materials covered under section 3406 (relating to the Uniformed and Overseas Absentee Voting Act)), individually or in bulk, shall be carried in accordance with the service standards established for first-class mail under section 3691.

“(c) NO POSTAGE REQUIRED FOR COMPLETED BALLOTS.—Completed absentee or other mail-in ballots (other than balloting materials covered under section 3406 (relating to the Uniformed and Overseas Absentee Voting Act)) shall be carried free of postage.

“(d) RESTRICTION OF OPERATIONAL CHANGES.—During the 120-day period that ends on the date of an election for Federal office, the Postal Service may not carry out any new operational change that would restrict the prompt and reliable delivery of election mail. This subsection applies to operational changes which include—

“(1) removing or eliminating any mail collection box without immediately replacing it; and

“(2) removing, decommissioning, or any other form of stopping the operation of mail sorting machines, other than for routine maintenance.

“(e) ELECTION MAIL COORDINATOR.—The Postal Service shall appoint an Election Mail Coordinator at each area office and district office to facilitate relevant information sharing with State, territorial, local, and Tribal election officials in regards to the mailing of election mail.”

(2) REIMBURSEMENT OF POSTAL SERVICE FOR REVENUE FORGONE.—Section 2401(c) of title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking “sections 3217 and 3403 through 3406” and inserting “sections 3217, 3403 through 3406, and 3409”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 34 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by section 1301(b) and section 1303(a), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“3409. Domestic election mail; restriction of operational changes prior to elections.”

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect upon the expiration of the 180-day period that begins on the date of enactment of this section.

SEC. 6. REQUIRING STATES TO PROVIDE SECURED DROP BOXES FOR VOTED BALLOTS IN ELECTIONS FOR FEDERAL OFFICE.

(a) REQUIREMENT.—Subtitle A of title III of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C.

21081 et seq.), as amended by sections 2, 3, and 4, is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 308 and 309 as sections 309 and 310, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 307 the following new section:

“SEC. 308. USE OF SECURED DROP BOXES FOR VOTED BALLOTS.

“(a) REQUIRING USE OF DROP BOXES.—Each jurisdiction shall provide in-person, secured, and clearly labeled drop boxes at which individuals may, at any time during the period described in subsection (b), drop off voted ballots in an election for Federal office.

“(b) MINIMUM PERIOD FOR AVAILABILITY OF DROP BOXES.—The period described in this subsection is, with respect to an election, the period that begins on the first day on which the jurisdiction sends mail-in ballots or absentee ballots (other than ballots for absent uniformed overseas voters (as defined in section 107(1) of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (52 U.S.C. 20310(1))) or overseas voters (as defined in section 107(5) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 20310(5))) to voters for such election and which ends at the time the polls close for the election in the jurisdiction involved.

“(c) ACCESSIBILITY.—

“(1) HOURS OF ACCESS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), each drop box provided under this section shall be accessible to voters for a reasonable number of hours each day.

“(B) 24-HOUR DROP BOXES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Of the number of drop boxes provided in any jurisdiction, not less than the required number shall be accessible for 24 hours per day during the period described in subsection (b).

“(ii) REQUIRED NUMBER.—The required number is the greater of—

“(I) 25 percent of the drop boxes required under subsection (d); or

“(II) 1 drop box.

“(2) POPULATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Drop boxes provided under this section shall be accessible for use—

“(i) by individuals with disabilities, as determined in consultation with the protection and advocacy systems (as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002)) of the State;

“(ii) by individuals with limited proficiency in the English language; and

“(iii) by homeless individuals (as defined in section 103 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302)) within the State.

“(B) DETERMINATION OF ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.—For purposes of this paragraph, drop boxes shall be considered to be accessible for use by individuals with disabilities if the drop boxes meet such criteria as the Attorney General may establish for such purposes.

“(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—If a drop box provided under this section is on the grounds of or inside a building or facility which serves as a polling place for an election during the period described in subsection (b), nothing in this subsection may be construed to waive any requirements regarding the accessibility of such polling place for the use of individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited proficiency in the English language, or homeless individuals.

“(d) NUMBER OF DROP BOXES.—Each jurisdiction shall have—

“(1) in the case of any election for Federal office prior to the regularly scheduled general election for Federal office held in November 2028, not less than 1 drop box for every 45,000 registered voters located in the jurisdiction; and

“(2) in the case of the regularly scheduled general election for Federal office held in November 2028 and each election for Federal office occurring thereafter, not less than the greater of—

“(A) 1 drop box for every 45,000 registered voters located in the jurisdiction; or

“(B) 1 drop box for every 15,000 votes that were cast by mail in the jurisdiction in the most recent general election that includes an election for the office of President. In no case shall a jurisdiction have fewer than 1 drop box for any election for Federal office.

“(e) LOCATION OF DROP BOXES.—The State shall determine the location of drop boxes provided under this section in a jurisdiction on the basis of criteria which ensure that the drop boxes are—

“(1) available to all voters on a non-discriminatory basis;

“(2) accessible to voters with disabilities (in accordance with subsection (c));

“(3) accessible by public transportation to the greatest extent possible;

“(4) available during all hours of the day;

“(5) sufficiently available in all communities in the jurisdiction, including rural communities and on Tribal lands within the jurisdiction (subject to subsection (f)); and

“(6) geographically distributed to provide a reasonable opportunity for voters to submit their voted ballot in a timely manner.

“(f) TIMING OF SCANNING AND PROCESSING OF BALLOTS.—For purposes of section 305(g) (relating to the timing of the processing and scanning of ballots for tabulation), a vote cast using a drop box provided under this section shall be treated in the same manner as a ballot cast by mail.

“(g) POSTING OF INFORMATION.—On or adjacent to each drop box provided under this section, the State shall post information on the requirements that voted absentee ballots must meet in order to be counted and tabulated in the election.

“(h) REMOTE SURVEILLANCE.—Nothing in this section shall prohibit a State from providing for the security of drop boxes through remote or electronic surveillance.

“(i) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply with respect to the regularly scheduled general election for Federal office held in November 2028 and each succeeding election for Federal office.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents of such Act, as amended by sections 2, 3, and 4, is amended—

(1) by redesignating the items relating to sections 308 and 309 as relating to sections 309 and 310, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after the item relating to section 307 the following new item:

“Sec. 308. Use of secured drop boxes for voted absentee ballots.”

SA 4684. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on

Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PROHIBITION ON FEDERAL PAYMENTS TO TERMINATE ELECTRIC POWER PROJECTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED PERSON.—The term “covered person” means any individual or entity that holds a lease from the Department of the Interior for the use of Federal land for a covered project.

(2) COVERED PROJECT.—The term “covered project” means a project to generate, store, or transmit electric energy on Federal land.

(b) PROHIBITION.—A Federal agency may not, without prior authorization from Congress, disburse any funding to, offer to pay, or offer to exchange any property with, a covered person in exchange for the covered person terminating a covered project.

SA 4685. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . MAINTENANCE OF GRANTS AND REVERSAL OF GRANT TERMINATIONS FOR LOW-COST, CLEAN ENERGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and notwithstanding section 200.340(a)(4) of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, the Secretary of Energy, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Secretary of Transportation may not terminate, in whole or in part, a Federal award relating to clean energy technology (as defined in section 10701 of the Research and Development, Competition, and Innovation Act (42 U.S.C. 19291)), require a renegotiation or rescoping of such Federal award, or decide not to fund a future budget period of such Federal award on the basis that such Federal award no longer effectuates the applicable program goals or agency priorities.

(b) REINSTATEMENT.—Any Federal award described in subsection (a) that was terminated, renegotiated, rescoped, or not progressed to future budget periods by the Secretary of Energy, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, or the Secretary of Transportation after January 19, 2025, for no longer effectuating the program goals or agency priorities, including pursuant to section 200.340(a)(4) of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, shall be reinstated by such agency or entity under its previous terms and conditions.

SA 4686. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. REED, Ms.

ALSOBROOKS, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Protecting Health Care and Lowering Costs Act”.

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF RECONCILIATION HEALTH PROVISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), subtitle B of title VII of An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14 (Public Law 119-21) is repealed and any law or regulation referred to in such subtitle shall be applied as if such subtitle and the amendments made by such subtitle had not been enacted.

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to the provisions of and amendments made by sections 71202, 71306, and 71401 of such Act.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS ALLOCATED UNDER THE RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM.—Section 2105(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397ee(h)), as added by Public Law 119-21, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(i) in the subparagraph heading by striking “UNEXPENDED OR UNOBLIGATED” and inserting “AVAILABILITY OF”;

(ii) by striking clauses (i) through (iii) and inserting the following:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), funds allocated to a State from amounts appropriated under subparagraph (A) shall remain available until expended.”; and

(iii) by redesignating clause (iv) as clause (ii); and

(B) in paragraph (2)(C), by striking “paragraph (1)(B)(iv)” and inserting “paragraph (1)(B)(ii)”.

SEC. 3. PERMANENT EXTENSION OF ENHANCED TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 36B(c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “but does not exceed 400 percent”.

(b) APPLICABLE PERCENTAGES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 36B(b)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(A) APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE.—The applicable percentage for any taxable year shall be the percentage such that the applicable percentage for any taxpayer whose household income is within an income tier specified in the following table shall increase, on a sliding scale in a linear manner, from the initial premium percentage to the final premium percentage specified in such table for such income tier:

“In the case of household income (expressed as a percent of poverty line) within the following income tier:	The initial premium percentage is—	The final premium percentage is—
Up to 150 percent	0	0
150 percent up to 200 percent	0	2.0
200 percent up to 250 percent	2.0	4.0
250 percent up to 300 percent	4.0	6.0
300 percent up to 400 percent	6.0	8.5

“In the case of household income (expressed as a percent of poverty line) within the following income tier:

The initial premium percentage is— The final premium percentage is—

Table with 3 columns: Income tier, Initial premium percentage, Final premium percentage. Row 1: 400 percent and higher, 8.5, 8.5.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS RELATING TO AFFORDABILITY OF COVERAGE.—

(A) Paragraph (1) of section 36B(c) of such Code is amended by striking subparagraph (E).

(B) Subparagraph (C) of section 36B(c)(2) of such Code is amended by striking clause (iv).

(C) Paragraph (4) of section 36B(c) of such Code is amended by striking subparagraph (F).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2025.

SA 4687. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN ENERGY EXPORTS TO THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

(a) PROHIBITION ON EXPORTATION OF LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS.—On and after the date of the enactment of this Act, the exportation of liquefied natural gas produced in the United States to the People’s Republic of China is prohibited.

(b) PROHIBITION ON EXPORT OF CRUDE AND REFINED OIL AND CERTAIN PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6201 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 101 the following:

“SEC. 102. PROHIBITION ON EXPORT OF CERTAIN PETROLEUM PRODUCTS TO THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no petroleum product described in subsection (b) that is produced in the United States may be exported from the United States to the People’s Republic of China.

“(b) PETROLEUM PRODUCT DESCRIBED.—A petroleum product referred to in subsection (a) is—

- “(1) crude oil;
“(2) refined oil or a refined oil product;
“(3) residual fuel oil; or
“(4) any other petroleum product (other than natural gas or any natural gas liquid product).

“(c) APPLICABILITY.—

“(1) PETROLEUM PRODUCTS IN TRANSPORT.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to any petroleum product described in subsection (b) that is in the process of being transported from the United States to the People’s Republic of China as of the date on which the prohibition under that subsection takes effect pursuant to subsection (d).

“(2) NATURAL GAS.—Subsection (a) does not apply to natural gas or any natural gas liquid product.

“(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The prohibition described in subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 10 days after the date of enactment of this section.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (Public Law 94-163; 89 Stat.

871; 114 Stat. 2034) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 101 the following:

“Sec. 102. Prohibition on export of certain petroleum products to the People’s Republic of China.”.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 101(b) of division O of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (42 U.S.C. 6212a(b)) is amended by inserting “and section 102 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act” after “subsections (c) and (d)”.

SA 4688. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Keeping Obstetrics Local Act”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—ENHANCING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR RURAL AND SAFETY NET HOSPITALS THAT PROVIDE OBSTETRIC SERVICES

Sec. 101. State studies and HHS report on costs of providing maternity, labor, and delivery services.

Sec. 102. Requiring adequate payment rates under Medicaid for maternity, labor, and delivery services at eligible hospitals.

Sec. 103. Increased Federal financial participation for maternity, labor, and delivery services furnished by eligible hospitals.

Sec. 104. Labor and delivery services anchor payments.

Sec. 105. Application of adequate payment requirement and increased Federal financial participation requirements to CHIP.

Sec. 106. Disregarding increased and additional payments to hospitals for purposes of other supplemental payments and upper payment limits.

TITLE II—EXPAND COVERAGE OF MATERNAL HEALTH CARE

Sec. 201. Requiring 12-month continuous, full benefit coverage for pregnant individuals under Medicaid and CHIP.

Sec. 202. Health homes for pregnant and postpartum women.

Sec. 203. Guidance on supporting and improving access to Medicaid and CHIP coverage of services provided by doulas and certain maternal health professionals.

Sec. 204. Medicaid and CHIP increased financial support for depression and anxiety screening during the perinatal and postpartum periods.

Sec. 205. Presumptive eligibility for pregnant individuals.

TITLE III—INVEST IN THE MATERNAL HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE

Sec. 301. Emergency obstetric workforce support.

Sec. 302. Streamlined screening and enrollment of providers of maternity, labor, and delivery services in neighboring States.

TITLE IV—REQUIRING PUBLIC COMMUNICATION OF OBSTETRICS DATA AND UNIT CLOSURES

Sec. 401. Timely notifications of impending hospital obstetric unit closures.

Sec. 402. Collection of data relating to hospital labor and delivery services.

TITLE I—ENHANCING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR RURAL AND SAFETY NET HOSPITALS THAT PROVIDE OBSTETRIC SERVICES

SEC. 101. STATE STUDIES AND HHS REPORT ON COSTS OF PROVIDING MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES.

(a) STATE STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 24 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, each State (as such term is defined in section 1101(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1301(a)(1)) for purposes of titles XIX and XXI of such Act) shall conduct a study on the costs of providing maternity, labor, and delivery services in applicable hospitals (as defined in paragraph (3)) and submit the results of such study to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”).

(2) CONTENT OF STUDY.—A State study required under paragraph (1) shall include the following information (to the extent practicable) with respect to maternity, labor, and delivery services furnished by applicable hospitals located in the State:

(A) An estimate of the cost of providing maternity, labor, and delivery services at applicable hospitals, based on the expenditures a representative sample of such hospitals incurred for providing such services during the 2 most recent years for which data is available.

(B) An estimate of the cost of providing maternity, labor, and delivery services at applicable hospitals that ceased providing labor and delivery services within the past 5 years, based on the expenditures a representative sample of such hospitals incurred for providing such services during the 2 most recent years for which data is available.

(C) To the extent data allows, an analysis of the extent to which geographic location, community demographics, and local economic factors (as defined by the Secretary) affect the cost of providing maternity, labor, and delivery services at applicable hospitals, including the cost of services that support the provision of maternity, labor, and delivery services.

(D) The amounts applicable hospitals are paid for maternity, labor, and delivery services, by geographic location and hospital size, under—

(i) Medicare;

(ii) the State Medicaid program, including payment amounts for such services under fee-for-service payment arrangements and under managed care (as applicable);

(iii) the State CHIP plan, including payment amounts for such services under fee-for-service payment arrangements and under managed care (as applicable); and

(iv) private health insurance.

(E) A comparative payment rate analysis—

(i) comparing payment rates for maternity, labor, and delivery services (inclusive of all payments received by applicable hospitals for furnishing maternity, labor, and delivery services) under the State Medicaid fee-for-service program to such payment rates for such services under Medicare (as described in section 447.203(b)(3) of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations), other Federally funded or State-funded programs (including, to the extent data is available, Medicaid managed care rates), and to the payment rates for such services, to the extent data is available, of private health insurers within geographic areas of the State; and

(ii) analyzing different payment methods for such services, such as the use of bundled payments, quality incentives, and low-volume adjustments.

(F) An evaluation, using such methodology and parameters established by the Secretary, of whether each hospital located in the State that furnishes maternity, labor, and delivery services is expected to experience in the next 3 years significant changes in particular expenditures or types of reimbursement for maternity, labor, and delivery services.

(3) APPLICABLE HOSPITAL DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term “applicable hospital” means any hospital located in a State that meets either of the following criteria:

(A) The hospital provides labor and delivery services and more than 50 percent of the hospital’s births (in the most recent year for which such data is available) are financed by the Medicaid program or CHIP.

(B) The hospital—

(i) is located in a rural area (as defined by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy for the purpose of rural health grant programs administered by such Office);

(ii) based on the most recent 2 years of data available (as determined by the Secretary), furnished services for less than an average of 300 births per year; and

(iii) provides labor and delivery services.

(4) ASSISTANCE TO SMALL HOSPITALS IN COMPILING COST INFORMATION.—There are appropriated to the Secretary for fiscal year 2026, \$10,000,000 for the purpose of providing grants and technical assistance to a hospital described in paragraph (3)(B) to enable such hospital to compile detailed information for use in the State studies required under paragraph (1), to remain available until expended.

(5) HHS REPORT ON STATE STUDIES.—For each year in which a State is required to conduct a study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall issue, not later than 12 months after the date on which the State submits to the Secretary the data described in such paragraph, a publicly available report that compiles and details the results of such study and includes the information described in paragraph (2).

(b) HHS REPORT ON NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION FINDINGS.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress, and make publicly available, a report analyzing the first studies conducted by States under subsection (a)(1), including recommendations for improving data collection on the cost of providing maternity, labor, and delivery services.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING.—In addition to the amount appropriated under subsection (a)(4), there are appropriated, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise obligated, \$3,000,000 for fiscal year 2026, to re-

main available until expended, to the Secretary of Health and Human Services for purposes of implementing this section.

SEC. 102. REQUIRING ADEQUATE PAYMENT RATES UNDER MEDICAID FOR MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES AT ELIGIBLE HOSPITALS.

(a) FEE-FOR-SERVICE PAYMENTS.—Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(13)—

(A) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (B);

(B) by adding “and” at the end of subparagraph (C); and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) for each fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2027, payment for maternity, labor, and delivery services (as defined in subsection (zz)) furnished during such fiscal year in an eligible hospital (as defined in such subsection) at a rate that is not less than the minimum payment rate specified for the fiscal year in paragraph (4) of such subsection.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(zz) MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES AND ELIGIBLE HOSPITALS DEFINED.—For purposes of subsection (a)(13)(D)—

“(1) MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘maternity, labor, and delivery services’ means such inpatient hospital services and outpatient hospital services, including behavioral health services, that are provided in relation to maternity care or labor and delivery, identified by appropriate ICD and CPT codes, as the Secretary shall specify after consultation with professional or medical societies with expertise in pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum care.

“(B) SCOPE.—Such term shall not be limited in application, for any eligible hospital, only to services that relate to a birth that occurs in the hospital.

“(C) RULEMAKING.—Not later than July 1, 2026, the Secretary shall issue an interim final rule specifying which services shall be considered maternity, labor, and delivery services for purposes of this subsection and subsection (a)(13)(D).

“(2) ELIGIBLE HOSPITAL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘eligible hospital’ means, with respect to a State and fiscal year—

“(i) a hospital that is located in a rural area (as defined by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy for the purpose of rural health grant programs administered by such Office);

“(ii) a critical access hospital (as defined in section 1861(mm)(1));

“(iii) a hospital operated by the Indian Health Service or an Indian Tribe under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act;

“(iv) a hospital for which, in the most recent 12-month period for which data is available, at least 50 percent of all births for which the hospital provided maternity, labor, and delivery services during such fiscal year were qualifying births; or

“(v) a hospital that is able to demonstrate, through a process to be determined by the Secretary, that, for the applicable fiscal year, the hospital projects that at least 50 percent of all births for which the hospital will provide maternity, labor, and delivery services during such fiscal year will be qualifying births.

“(B) IDENTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE HOSPITALS.—Each State, subject to the approval of the Secretary, shall identify the hospitals

in the State that are eligible hospitals with respect to a fiscal year.

“(3) QUALIFYING BIRTH.—For purposes of paragraph (2), the term ‘qualifying birth’ means a birth for which any maternity, labor, and delivery services associated with the birth—

“(A) were paid for under a State plan under this title (or under a waiver of such a plan) or under a State child health plan under title XXI (or under a waiver of such a plan);

“(B) were paid for under title XVIII;

“(C) were provided by the Indian Health Service or a Native Hawaiian health care system (as defined in section 12 of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act); or

“(D) were provided to a patient who does not have minimum essential coverage (as defined in section 5000A(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) and were not fully paid for by such patient.

“(4) MINIMUM PAYMENT RATE SPECIFIED.—The minimum payment rate specified in this paragraph is, with respect to an eligible hospital and maternal, labor, and delivery services—

“(A) for fiscal year 2027, 150 percent of the payment rate that would apply for such services and hospital under title XVIII; and

“(B) for each period of 5 fiscal years beginning with fiscal years 2028 through 2032, a payment rate that is determined for such period by the Secretary to accurately reflect the costs incurred by eligible hospitals in providing such services, informed by the results of the most recent State studies submitted to the Secretary under section 101(a) of the Keeping Obstetrics Local Act.”.

(b) UNDER MEDICAID MANAGED CARE PLANS.—Section 1932(f) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u–2(f)) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by inserting “AND MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES AT ELIGIBLE HOSPITALS” after “SERVICES”; and

(2) by striking “described in section 1902(a)(13)(C)” and inserting “described in subparagraph (C) of section 1902(a)(13) or maternity, labor, and delivery services described in subparagraph (D) of such section that are furnished by an eligible hospital (as defined in section 1902(zz))”.

SEC. 103. INCREASED FEDERAL FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION FOR MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES FURNISHED BY ELIGIBLE HOSPITALS.

Section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking “and (ii)” and inserting “(i), and (11)”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(11) MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsection (b), with respect to State expenditures for medical assistance for maternity, labor, and delivery services furnished by an eligible hospital (as such terms are defined in section 1902(zz)) in a fiscal quarter that begins on or after October 1, 2026—

“(A) the Federal medical assistance percentage applicable to the enhanced payment rate amount of such expenditures (as determined for the State and quarter under paragraph (2)(A)) shall be equal to 100 percent; and

“(B) subject to paragraph (3), the Federal medical assistance percentage applicable to the base payment rate amount of such expenditures (as determined for the State and quarter under paragraph (2)(B)) shall be equal to the enhanced FMAP determined for the State and quarter under section 2105(b).

“(2) DETERMINATION OF ENHANCED PAYMENT RATE AMOUNT AND BASE PAYMENT RATE AMOUNT.—

“(A) ENHANCED PAYMENT RATE AMOUNT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(A), the enhanced payment rate amount for a State and fiscal quarter is equal to the amount of State expenditures for medical assistance for maternity, labor, and delivery services furnished by an eligible hospital (as such terms are defined in section 1902(zz)) in such fiscal quarter that is attributable to the amount by which the minimum payment rate required under section 1902(a)(13)(D) (or, by application, section 1932(f)) exceeds the base payment rate applicable to such services, as determined for the State, quarter, and services under clause (ii).

“(ii) BASE PAYMENT RATE.—For purposes of clause (i), the base payment rate determined for a State, a fiscal quarter, and maternity, labor, and delivery services (as defined in section 1902(zz)) shall be equal to—

“(I) the payment rate applicable to such services under the State plan (or under a waiver of such plan) as of January 1, 2025; increased by

“(II) the percentage increase in the medical care component of the consumer price index for all urban consumers from January of 2025 to the month ending on the day before the 1st day of such fiscal quarter.

“(B) BASE PAYMENT RATE AMOUNT.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(B), the base payment rate amount for a State and fiscal quarter is equal to—

“(i) the total amount of State expenditures for medical assistance for maternity, labor, and delivery services furnished by an eligible hospital (as such terms are defined in section 1902(zz)) in such fiscal quarter; minus

“(ii) the enhanced payment rate amount determined for the State and fiscal quarter under subparagraph (A).

“(3) APPLICATION OF HIGHER MATCH.—Subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) shall not apply in the case of State expenditures described in such subparagraph if the application of such subparagraph would result in a lower Federal medical assistance percentage for such expenditures than would otherwise apply without the application of such paragraph.

“(4) EXCLUSION OF EXPENDITURES FROM TERRITORIAL CAPS.—Any payment made to a territory for medical assistance that is subject to the Federal medical assistance percentage specified in paragraph (1)(A) or the enhanced FMAP referred to in paragraph (1)(B) shall not be taken into account for purposes of applying payment limits under subsections (f) and (g) of section 1108.”

SEC. 104. LABOR AND DELIVERY SERVICES ANCHOR PAYMENTS.

(a) STATE REQUIREMENT.—Section 1902(a)(13)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(13)(A)) is amended—

(1) in clause (iii), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (iv), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting “, and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(v) in the case of hospitals, such rates take into account (in a manner consistent with section 1923A) the situation of low volume obstetric hospitals (as such term is defined in such section);”

(b) REQUIRING ANCHOR PAYMENTS FOR LOW VOLUME OBSTETRIC HOSPITALS.—Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) is amended by inserting the following after section 1923:

“SEC. 1923A. ANCHOR PAYMENTS FOR LABOR AND DELIVERY SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOW VOLUME OBSTETRIC HOSPITALS.

“(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF REQUIREMENT.—A State plan under this title shall not be considered to meet the requirement of section 1902(a)(13)(A)(v) (insofar as it requires payments to hospitals to take into account the

situation of low volume obstetric hospitals), as of October 1, 2026, unless the State has submitted to the Secretary, by not later than such date, an amendment to such plan that provides for an annual anchor payment to such hospitals, consistent with subsection (c).

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) ANTENATAL TRANSFER.—The term ‘antenatal transfer’ means, with respect to a hospital, a pregnant individual who was expected to receive labor and delivery services at the hospital but who is transferred to a different hospital because of a need for labor and delivery services that are not available at the transferring hospital.

“(2) DELIVERY VOLUME.—The term ‘delivery volume’ means, with respect to a hospital and a fiscal year, the total number of births occurring in, and antenatal transfers made by, such hospital during such year.

“(3) LABOR AND DELIVERY REVENUE FLOOR.—The term ‘labor and delivery revenue floor’ means, with respect to a low volume obstetric hospital and a fiscal year, the amount equal to the sum of—

“(A) the product of—

“(i) the delivery volume for such hospital and fiscal year; and

“(ii) the per delivery amount for such fiscal year; and

“(B) the standby capacity amount for such fiscal year.

“(4) LABOR AND DELIVERY SERVICES.—The term ‘labor and delivery services’ means such inpatient and outpatient hospital services related to labor and delivery, including services related to antenatal transfers, identified by appropriate ICD and CPT codes, as the Secretary shall specify in consultation with professional or medical societies with expertise in this area.

“(5) LOW VOLUME OBSTETRIC HOSPITAL.—The term ‘low volume obstetric hospital’ means, with respect to a hospital and a fiscal year, a hospital—

“(A) that is an eligible hospital (as defined in section 1902(zz)(2));

“(B) in which the average number of births for which the hospital provided labor and delivery services during the preceding 3 fiscal years is less than 300 births per year;

“(C) that did not provide labor and delivery services in the preceding fiscal year, but in which the average number of births for which the hospital provided labor and delivery services during the most recent 3 fiscal years in which the hospital provided labor and delivery services is less than 300 births per year;

“(D) that is not described in subparagraphs (B) or (C) but, in the applicable fiscal year, provides labor and delivery services for fewer than 300 births; or

“(E) that is not described in subparagraphs (B) through (D) but is certified by the State in which the hospital is located as meeting such criteria as the Secretary shall establish for identifying hospitals that are essential to meeting the needs of an underserved population, such as serving a population with limited English proficiency, serving specific racial or ethnic populations, or other factors.

“(6) MEDICAID LABOR AND DELIVERY REVENUE FLOOR.—The term ‘Medicaid labor and delivery revenue floor’ means, with respect to a low volume obstetric hospital and a fiscal year, the product of—

“(A) the labor and delivery revenue floor for such hospital and fiscal year; and

“(B) the percentage of the delivery volume of such hospital in such fiscal year that were paid for under a State plan under this title (or under a waiver of such a plan) or under a State child health plan under title XXI (or under a waiver of such a plan).

“(7) PER DELIVERY AMOUNT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘per delivery amount’ means, with respect to a fiscal year, an amount, as determined under subparagraph (B), that represents the marginal cost to a low volume obstetric hospital of a birth or an antenatal transfer.

“(B) DETERMINATION OF PER DELIVERY AMOUNT.—

“(i) FISCAL YEAR 2028.—For fiscal year 2028, the per delivery amount shall be \$10,000.

“(ii) INDEXING.—Subject to clause (iii), for each fiscal year after fiscal year 2028, the per delivery amount shall be the amount that applied under this subparagraph for the preceding fiscal year increased by the percentage increase in the medical care component of the consumer price index for all urban consumers for the 12-month period ending with September of such preceding fiscal year.

“(iii) PERIODIC REVISION OF PER DELIVERY AMOUNT.—Not less than once every 5 fiscal years, the Secretary shall collect and analyze data on the costs of labor and delivery services at low volume obstetric hospitals and, through rulemaking, shall establish a new per delivery amount for purposes of this section to ensure that such amount accurately reflects the marginal cost to a low volume obstetric hospital of a birth or an antenatal delivery.

“(8) STANDBY CAPACITY AMOUNT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘standby capacity amount’ means, with respect to a fiscal year, an amount, as determined under subparagraph (B), that represents the minimum level of expenditures by a low volume obstetric hospital that is necessary to ensure that adequate personnel, equipment, and facilities are available at all times to provide labor and delivery services.

“(B) DETERMINATION OF STANDBY CAPACITY AMOUNT.—

“(i) FISCAL YEAR 2028.—For fiscal year 2028, the standby capacity amount shall be \$1,200,000.

“(ii) INDEXING.—Subject to clause (iii), for each fiscal year after fiscal year 2028, the standby capacity amount shall be the amount that applied under this subparagraph for the preceding fiscal year increased by the percentage increase in the medical care component of the consumer price index for all urban consumers for the 12-month period ending with September of such preceding fiscal year.

“(iii) PERIODIC REVISION OF STANDBY CAPACITY AMOUNT.—Not less than once every 5 fiscal years, the Secretary shall collect and analyze data on the costs of labor and delivery services at low volume obstetric hospitals and, through rulemaking, shall establish a new standby capacity amount for purposes of this section to ensure that such amount accurately reflects the minimum level of expenditures by a low volume obstetric hospital that is necessary to ensure that adequate personnel, equipment, and facilities are available at all times to provide labor and delivery services.

“(c) ANCHOR PAYMENT FOR LOW VOLUME OBSTETRIC HOSPITALS.—Not later than 3 months after the end of each fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2028, each State shall pay to each low volume obstetric hospital in the State an amount that is equal to the amount (if any) by which—

“(1) the Medicaid labor and delivery revenue floor for the hospital and fiscal year; exceeds

“(2) the total amount of all payments made to the low volume obstetric hospital under the State plan under this title (or under a waiver of such plan) and under the State child health plan under title XXI (or

under a waiver of such plan) (other than payments under this section) for labor and delivery services provided by such hospital during such fiscal year.

“(d) REQUIREMENTS FOR RECEIPT OF PAYMENTS.—No anchor payment shall be made to a low volume obstetric hospital under this section for a fiscal year unless the hospital can satisfy the following requirements:

“(1) SKILLS MAINTENANCE AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.—The hospital demonstrates to the satisfaction of the State that the hospital conducts and completes skills maintenance and training activities, including continuing education and training to support maintenance of obstetric skills, that satisfy such requirements as the Secretary, taking into consideration nationally recognized obstetrics skills, maintenance, and training standards such as standards published by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses, shall specify for the purposes of this section.

“(2) CONTINUED PROVISION OF LABOR AND DELIVERY SERVICES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The hospital and the State enter into a contract under which, in exchange for such payment under this section for a fiscal year, the hospital agrees to continue to provide labor and delivery services—

“(i) for the period that begins with such fiscal year and ends on the last day of the second fiscal year that follows such fiscal year; and

“(ii) at a level that is not less than the level at which the hospital provided such services in the fiscal year to which such payment relates, unless the hospital can demonstrate that the need for services in the community has decreased and that the new level of services will be adequate to meet that need.

“(B) RECOVERY OF PAYMENT IN THE EVENT OF BREACH OF CONTRACT BY HOSPITAL.—The terms of the contract between a hospital and a State required under subparagraph (A) shall provide that if the hospital does not provide labor and delivery services as required under the contract throughout the period described in such subparagraph for any reason (including in the event of the hospital’s bankruptcy or closure) the State may recover the full amount of the payment under this section to which the contract relates and in the event of the hospital’s bankruptcy, the State shall be given preferred creditor status for purposes of the collection of such payment.

“(3) UTILIZATION OF FUNDS FOR LABOR AND DELIVERY SERVICES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The hospital and the State enter into a contract under which, in exchange for such payment under this section, the hospital agrees to utilize funds received under such payment for the provision of labor and delivery services in the community served by the hospital.

“(B) RECOVERY OF PAYMENT IN THE EVENT OF BREACH OF CONTRACT BY HOSPITAL.—The terms of the contract between a hospital and a State required under subparagraph (A) shall provide that if the hospital does not utilize payment funds for labor and delivery services as required under the contract for any reason (including in the event of the hospital’s bankruptcy or closure) the State may recover the full amount of the payment under this section to which the contract relates and in the event of the hospital’s bankruptcy, the State shall be given preferred creditor status for purposes of the collection of such payment.

“(e) TREATMENT OF PAYMENTS; RECOVERY OF PAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Payments made by a State under this section for a fiscal year—

“(A) shall be in addition to any other payments made to hospitals for labor and delivery services under the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) under this title, under the State child health assistance plan under title XXI (or under a waiver of such plan), or under title XVIII for the fiscal year, including disproportionate share hospital payments under section 1923 or section 1886(d)(5)(F) and other supplemental payments that are not made under this section; and

“(B) shall be treated as medical assistance for which payment is made under section 1903(a), except that the Federal medical assistance percentage applicable to amounts expended by a State for such payments shall be equal to the enhanced FMAP determined for the State and fiscal year under section 2105(b).

“(2) PAYMENTS RECOVERED BY A STATE.—If a State recovers any amount of a payment made by a State under this section (whether pursuant to paragraphs (2)(B) or (3)(B) of subsection (d) or otherwise), the amount so recovered shall be treated as an overpayment recovered by the State under section 1903(d).”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) is amended as follows:

(1) In section 1903—
(A) in subsection (d)(6)(B)—
(i) by striking “related to the total amount” and inserting the following: “related to—

“(i) the total amount”;

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(iii) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(ii) the total amount of payments made to individual providers (by provider) under section 1923A during such fiscal year.”;

(B) in subsection (bb)(2)(B)—
(i) in the header, by inserting “AND LOW VOLUME OBSTETRIC HOSPITAL” after “DSH”; and

(ii) by inserting “or a payment made to a low volume obstetric hospital under section 1923A” before the period.

(2) In section 1905—
(A) in subsection (cc), by striking “section 1923” the second place it appears and inserting “section 1923 or 1923A”; and

(B) in subsection (ii)(2)(A), by inserting “or payments to low volume obstetric hospitals described in section 1923A” before the semicolon.

SEC. 105. APPLICATION OF ADEQUATE PAYMENT REQUIREMENT AND INCREASED FEDERAL FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS TO CHIP.

Section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (W) as subparagraphs (C) through (X), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph:

“(B) Section 1902(a)(13)(D) and section 1905(11) (relating to the minimum payment rate required for maternity, labor, and delivery services furnished by an eligible hospital and Federal financial participation for State expenditures for such services).”.

SEC. 106. DISREGARDING INCREASED AND ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS TO HOSPITALS FOR PURPOSES OF OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS AND UPPER PAYMENT LIMITS.

A hospital’s eligibility for any Federally funded supplemental payment (including a disproportionate share payment under section 1886(d)(5)(F) or 1923 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww(d)(5)(F), 1396r-4)), the determination of the amount of such payment, and the application of any Federal

limitation on the aggregate amount of payments that a State may make to the hospital (including any upper payment limitation), shall be determined without regard to the amount of any increase to a payment received by a hospital or any additional payment made to a hospital that is attributable to the amendments made by this title.

TITLE II—EXPAND COVERAGE OF MATERNAL HEALTH CARE

SEC. 201. REQUIRING 12-MONTH CONTINUOUS, FULL BENEFIT COVERAGE FOR PREGNANT INDIVIDUALS UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.

(a) MEDICAID.—Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (10), in the matter following subparagraph (G), by striking “(VII) the medical assistance made available to an individual described in subsection (1)(1)(A) who is eligible for medical assistance only because of subparagraph (A)(i)(IV) or (A)(ii)(IX) shall be limited to medical assistance for services related to pregnancy (including prenatal, delivery, postpartum, and family planning services), medical assistance for services related to other conditions which may complicate pregnancy, and medical assistance for vaccines described in section 1905(a)(4)(E) and the administration of such vaccines during the period described in such section,” and inserting “(VII) [Repealed].”;

(B) in paragraph (89), by striking “and” at the end;

(C) in paragraph (90), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(D) by inserting after paragraph (90) the following new paragraph:

“(91) provide that the State plan is in compliance with subsection (e)(16).”;

(2) in subsection (e)(16)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “At the option of the State, the State plan (or waiver of such State plan) may provide” and inserting “A State plan (or waiver of such State plan) shall provide”;

(B) in subparagraph (B), in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking “by a State making an election under this paragraph” and inserting “under a State plan (or a waiver of such State plan)”;

(C) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) by striking “A State making an election under this paragraph” and inserting “In the case of a State”;

(ii) by striking “shall also make the election” and inserting “the State shall provide coverage”.

(b) CHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (L) of section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)), as redesignated by section 105, is amended to read as follows:

“(L) Paragraphs (5) and (16) of section 1902(e) (relating to the requirement to provide medical assistance under the State plan or waiver consisting of full benefits during pregnancy and throughout the 12-month period that begins on the last day of the individual’s pregnancy and ends on the last day of the month in which such 12-month period ends).”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 2112(d)(2)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397ll(d)(2)(A)) is amended by striking “the month in which the 60-day period” and all that follows through “pursuant to section 2107(e)(1).”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall take effect on the 1st day of the 1st calendar quarter that begins on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) EXCEPTION FOR STATE LEGISLATION.—In the case of a State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act or a State child health plan under title XXI of such Act that the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines requires State legislation in order for the respective plan to meet any requirement imposed by amendments made by this subsection, the respective plan shall not be regarded as failing to comply with the requirements of such title solely on the basis of its failure to meet such an additional requirement before the 1st day of the 1st calendar quarter beginning after the close of the 1st regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of enactment of this Act. For purposes of the previous sentence, in the case of a State that has a 2-year legislative session, each year of the session shall be considered to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

(3) STATE OPTION FOR EARLIER EFFECTIVE DATE.—A State may elect to have subsection (e)(16) of section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) and subparagraph (L) of section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)), as redesignated by section 105 and amended by subsection (b) of this section, take effect with respect to the State on the 1st day of any fiscal quarter that begins before the date described in paragraph (1) and apply to amounts payable to the State for expenditures for medical assistance, child health assistance, or pregnancy-related assistance to pregnant or postpartum individuals furnished on or after such day.

SEC. 202. HEALTH HOMES FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM WOMEN.

(a) MEDICAID.—Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1945A the following new section:

“SEC. 1945B. STATE OPTION TO PROVIDE COORDINATED CARE THROUGH A HEALTH HOME FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM INDIVIDUALS.

“(a) STATE OPTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 1902(a)(1) (relating to statewideness) and section 1902(a)(10)(B) (relating to comparability), beginning January 1, 2028, a State, at its option as a State plan amendment, may provide for medical assistance under this title to an eligible individual who chooses to—

“(A) enroll in a maternity health home under this section by selecting a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team as the individual’s maternity health home for purposes of providing the individual with pregnancy and postpartum coordinated care services; or

“(B) receive such services from a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team that has voluntarily opted to participate in a maternity health home for eligible individuals under this section.

“(2) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘eligible individual’ means an individual—

“(A) who is eligible for medical assistance under the State plan (or under a waiver of such plan) for all items and services covered under the State plan (or under a waiver of such plan);

“(B) who is not enrolled in a health home under section 1945 or 1945A; and

“(C) either—

“(i) who is pregnant; or

“(ii) whose pregnancy has ended and is within the 12-month period that begins on the last day of the individual’s pregnancy and ends on the last day of the month in which such 12-month period ends.

“(b) QUALIFICATION STANDARDS.—The Secretary shall establish standards for qualifica-

tion as a maternity health home or as a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team eligible for participation in a maternity health home for purposes of this section. In establishing such standards, the Secretary shall consider best practices and models of care used by recipients of grants under section 330P of the Public Health Service Act. Such standards shall include requiring a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, and a health team designated as a maternity health home to demonstrate to the State the ability to do the following:

“(1) Coordinate prompt care and access to necessary maternity care services, including services provided by specialists, and programs for an eligible individual during the individual’s pregnancy and the 365-day period beginning on the last day of such pregnancy.

“(2) Develop an individualized, comprehensive, patient-centered care plan for each eligible individual that accommodates patient preferences and, if applicable, reflects adjustments to the payment methodology described in subsection (c)(2)(B).

“(3) Develop and incorporate into each eligible individual’s care plan, in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner consistent with the needs of the eligible individual, ongoing home care, community-based primary care, inpatient care, social support services, health-related social needs services, behavioral health services, local hospital emergency care, and, in the event of a change in income that would result in the eligible individual losing eligibility for medical assistance under the State plan (or under a waiver of such plan), care management and planning related to a change in the eligible individual’s health insurance coverage.

“(4) Coordinate with pediatric care providers, as appropriate.

“(5) Collect and report information under subsection (f)(1).

“(c) PAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A State shall provide a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team designated as a maternity health home with payments for the provision of health home services to each eligible individual that selects such provider, team of health care professionals, or health team as the eligible individual’s health home. Payments made to a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team for such services shall be treated as medical assistance for purposes of section 1903(a), except that, during the first 8 fiscal year quarters that the State plan amendment is in effect, the Federal medical assistance percentage applicable to such payments shall be equal to 90 percent.

“(2) METHODOLOGY.—The State shall specify in the State plan amendment the methodology the State will use for determining payment for the provision of pregnancy and postpartum coordinated care services or treatment during an eligible individual’s pregnancy and the 365-day period beginning on the last day of such pregnancy. Such methodology for determining payment—

“(A) may be based on—

“(i) a per-member per-month basis for each eligible individual enrolled in a maternity health home;

“(ii) a prospective payment model, in the case of payments to Federally qualified health centers or a rural health clinics; or

“(iii) an alternate model of payment proposed by the State and approved by the Secretary;

“(B) may be adjusted to reflect, with respect to each eligible individual—

“(i) the severity of the risks associated with the individual’s pregnancy;

“(ii) the severity of the risks associated with the individual’s postpartum health care needs; and

“(iii) the level or amount of time of care coordination required with respect to the individual; and

“(C) shall be established consistent with section 1902(a)(30)(A).

“(d) COORDINATING CARE.—

“(1) HOSPITAL NOTIFICATION.—A State with a State plan amendment approved under this section shall require each hospital that is a participating provider under the State plan (or under a waiver of such plan) to establish procedures in the case of an eligible individual who seeks treatment in the emergency department of such hospital for—

“(A) providing the individual with culturally and linguistically appropriate information supplied by the State describing the respective treatment models and opportunities for the individual to access a maternity health home and its associated benefits; and

“(B) notifying the maternity health home in which the individual is enrolled, or the designated provider, team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or health team treating the individual, of the individual’s treatment in the emergency department and of the protocols for the maternity health home, designated provider, or team to be involved in the individual’s emergency care or post-discharge care.

“(2) EDUCATION WITH RESPECT TO AVAILABILITY OF A MATERNITY HEALTH HOME.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In order for a State plan amendment to be approved under this section, a State shall include in the State plan amendment a description of the State’s process for—

“(i) educating providers participating in the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) on the availability of maternity health homes for eligible individuals, including the process by which such providers can participate in or refer an eligible individual to an approved maternity health home or a designated provider, team of health care professionals operating such a provider, or health team designated as a maternity health home; and

“(ii) educating eligible individuals, in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, on the availability of maternity health homes.

“(B) OUTREACH.—The process established by the State under subparagraph (A) shall include the participation of entities or other public or private organizations or entities that provide outreach and information on the availability of health care items and services to families of individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under the State plan (or a waiver of such plan).

“(3) MENTAL HEALTH COORDINATION.—A State with a State plan amendment approved under this section shall consult and coordinate, as appropriate, with the Secretary in addressing issues regarding the prevention, identification, and treatment of mental health conditions and substance use disorders among eligible individuals.

“(4) SOCIAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES.—A State with a State plan amendment approved under this section shall consult and coordinate, as appropriate, with the Secretary in establishing means to connect eligible individuals receiving pregnancy and postpartum coordinated care services under this section with social and support services, including services made available under maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting programs established under section 511 and services made available under section

330H or title X of the Public Health Service Act.

“(5) COORDINATION WITH GRANT PROGRAM FOR INTEGRATED SERVICES FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM WOMEN.—A State with a State plan amendment approved under this section shall consult and coordinate, as appropriate, with the Secretary with respect to the provision of medical assistance to eligible individuals enrolled in a maternity health home under this section and grantees delivering integrated health care services to pregnant and postpartum women under section 330P of the Public Health Service Act (including, if applicable, the State).

“(e) MONITORING.—A State shall include in the State plan amendment—

“(1) a methodology for tracking reductions in inpatient days and reductions in the total cost of care resulting from improved care coordination and management under this section;

“(2) a proposal for use of health information technology in providing an eligible individual with pregnancy and postpartum coordinated care services as specified under this section and improving service delivery and coordination across the care continuum; and

“(3) a methodology for tracking prompt and timely access to medically necessary care for eligible individuals from out-of-State providers.

“(f) DATA COLLECTION.—

“(1) PROVIDER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—In order to receive payments from a State under subsection (c), a maternity health home, or a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team designated as a maternity health home, shall report to the State, at such time and in such form and manner as may be required by the State, including through a health information exchange or other public health data sharing entity, the following information:

“(A) With respect to each such designated provider, team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, and health team designated as a maternity health home, the name, National Provider Identification number, address, and specific health care services offered to be provided to any eligible individual who has selected such provider, team of health care professionals, or health team as the eligible individual's maternity health home.

“(B) Information on all other applicable measures for determining the quality of services provided by such provider, team of health care professionals, or health team.

“(C) Information concerning the factors described in paragraph (2)(A)(vi) received from health risk assessments of eligible individuals conducted and completed by the designated provider, team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or health team designated as a maternity health home.

“(D) Such other information as the Secretary shall specify in guidance.

“(2) STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.—A State with a State plan amendment approved under this section shall report to the Secretary (and, upon request, to the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission), at such time, but at a minimum annually, and in such form and manner determined by the Secretary to be reasonable and minimally burdensome, the following information:

“(i) Information described in paragraph (1).

“(ii) The number and, to the extent available and while maintaining all relevant privacy and confidentiality protections, disaggregated demographic information (including information on geography) of eligi-

ble individuals who have enrolled in a maternity health home pursuant to this section.

“(iii) The number of maternity health homes in the State designated under this section.

“(iv) The medical conditions or factors that contribute to severe maternal morbidity among eligible individuals enrolled in maternity health homes in the State.

“(v) The extent to which such individuals receive health care items and services under the State plan before, during, and after an individual's enrollment in such a maternity health home.

“(vi) Where applicable, mortality data and data for the associated causes of pregnancy-related death for eligible individuals enrolled in a maternity health home under this section, in accordance with subsection (g). For deaths occurring postpartum, such data shall distinguish between deaths occurring up to 42 days postpartum and deaths occurring between 43 days to up to 1 year postpartum. Where applicable, data reported under this clause shall be reported alongside comparable data from a State's maternal mortality review committee, as established in accordance with section 317K(d) of the Public Health Service Act, for purposes of further identifying and comparing statewide trends in maternal mortality among populations participating in the maternity health home under this section.

“(B) IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after a State has a State plan amendment approved under this section, the State shall submit to the Secretary, and make publicly available on the appropriate State website, a report on how the State is implementing the option established under this section, including through any best practices adopted by the State.

“(g) CONFIDENTIALITY.—A State with a State plan amendment under this section shall establish confidentiality protections for the purposes of subsection (f)(2)(A) to ensure, at a minimum, that there is no disclosure by the State of any identifying information about any specific eligible individual enrolled in a maternity health home or any maternal mortality case, and that all relevant confidentiality and privacy protections, including the requirements under section 1902(a)(7)(A), are maintained.

“(h) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require—

“(1) an eligible individual to enroll in a maternity health home under this section; or

“(2) a designated provider or health team to act as a maternity health home and provide services in accordance with this section if the provider or health team does not voluntarily agree to act as a maternity health home.

“(i) PLANNING GRANTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning January 1, 2027, from the amount appropriated under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall award planning grants to States for purposes of developing and submitting a State plan amendment under this section. The Secretary shall award a grant to each State that applies for a grant under this subsection and meets the application criteria established by the Secretary, and the Secretary may determine the amount of the grant based on the merits of the application and the goal of the State to prioritize health outcomes for eligible individuals. A planning grant awarded to a State under this subsection shall remain available until expended.

“(2) APPROPRIATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2027, for the purposes of making grants under this subsection, to remain available until expended.

“(3) LIMITATION.—The total amount of payments made to States under this subsection shall not exceed \$50,000,000.

“(j) ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) DESIGNATED PROVIDER.—The term ‘designated provider’ means a physician (including an obstetrician-gynecologist or, if applicable, a certified nurse midwife, or certified professional midwife who meets or exceeds the education and training standards of the International Confederation of Midwives and who is licensed to practice within the State), a hospital, clinical practice or clinical group practice, rural health clinic, community health center, community mental health center, or any other entity or provider that is determined by the State and approved by the Secretary to be qualified to be a maternity health home on the basis of documentation evidencing that the entity or provider has the systems, expertise, and infrastructure in place to provide pregnancy and postpartum coordinated care services. Such term may include providers who are employed by, or affiliated with, a hospital.

“(2) HEALTH TEAM.—The term ‘health team’ has the meaning given such term for purposes of section 3502 of Public Law 111-148.

“(3) MATERNITY HEALTH HOME.—The term ‘maternity health home’ means a designated provider (including a provider that operates in coordination with a team of health care professionals) or a health team that is selected by an eligible individual to provide pregnancy and postpartum coordinated care services.

“(4) PREGNANCY AND POSTPARTUM COORDINATED CARE SERVICES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘pregnancy and postpartum coordinated care services’ means items and services related to the coordination of care for comprehensive and timely high-quality, culturally and linguistically appropriate, services described in subparagraph (B) that are provided by a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team designated as a maternity health home.

“(B) SERVICES DESCRIBED.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The services described in this subparagraph shall include with respect to a State electing the State plan amendment option under this section, any medical assistance for items and services for which payment is available under the State plan or under a waiver of such plan.

“(ii) OTHER ITEMS AND SERVICES.—In addition to medical assistance described in clause (i), the services described in this subparagraph shall include the following:

“(I) Any item or service for which medical assistance is otherwise available under the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) related to the treatment of an individual during the individual's pregnancy and the 1-year period beginning on the last day of such pregnancy, including mental health and substance use disorder services.

“(II) Comprehensive care management.

“(III) Care coordination (including with pediatricians as appropriate), health promotion, and providing access to the full range of maternal, obstetric, and gynecologic services, including services from out-of-State providers.

“(IV) Comprehensive transitional care, including appropriate follow-up, from inpatient to other settings.

“(V) Patient and family support (including authorized representatives).

“(VI) Referrals to community and social support services, if relevant.

“(VII) Use of health information technology to link services, as feasible and appropriate.

“(5) TEAM OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.—The term ‘team of health care professionals’ means a team of health care professionals (as described in the State plan amendment under this section) that may—

“(A) include—

“(i) physicians, including gynecologist-obstetricians, certified nurse midwives, or certified professional midwives who meet or exceed the education and training standards of the International Confederation of Midwives and who are licensed to practice within the State, family physicians, primary care physicians, pediatricians, and other professionals such as physicians assistants, advance practice nurses, nurses, nurse care coordinators, dietitians, nutritionists, social workers, behavioral health professionals, physical counselors, physical therapists, occupational therapists, or any professionals that assist in prenatal care, delivery, or postpartum care for which medical assistance is available under the State plan or a waiver of such plan and determined to be appropriate by the State and approved by the Secretary;

“(ii) an entity or individual who is designated to coordinate such care delivered by the team; and

“(iii) when appropriate and if otherwise eligible to furnish items and services that are reimbursable as medical assistance under the State plan or under a waiver of such plan, doula, community health workers, translators and interpreters, and other individuals with culturally appropriate and trauma-informed expertise; and

“(B) provide care at a facility that is free-standing, virtual, or based at a hospital, community health center, community mental health center, rural health clinic, clinical practice or clinical group practice, academic health center, or any entity determined to be appropriate by the State and approved by the Secretary.”

(b) APPLICABILITY TO CHIP.—Section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)), as amended by section 105, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(Y) Section 1945B (relating to optional health homes for pregnant and postpartum individuals).”

SEC. 203. GUIDANCE ON SUPPORTING AND IMPROVING ACCESS TO MEDICAID AND CHIP COVERAGE OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY DOULAS AND CERTAIN MATERNAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall issue and publish guidance for States concerning options for supporting and improving access to coverage and payment under a State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) or under a waiver of such plan, and under a State child health plan under title XXI of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1397aa et seq.) or under a waiver of such plan, for services provided by doula, certified nurse midwives, certified midwives, or certified professional midwives, who meet or exceed the education and training standards of the International Confederation of Midwives and who are licensed to practice within the State and certain maternal health professionals (specified by the Secretary)—

(1) in rural areas;

(2) across a continuum of care; and

(3) among varied provider settings and payment and care models, including managed care.

SEC. 204. MEDICAID AND CHIP INCREASED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY SCREENING DURING THE PERINATAL AND POSTPARTUM PERIODS.

(a) MEDICAID.—Section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d), as amended by section 103, is further amended—

(1) in the first sentence of subsection (b), by striking “subsection (a)(4)(D)” and inserting “subsections (a)(4)(D) and (mm)”;

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(mm) INCREASED FMAP FOR DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY SCREENING DURING THE PERINATAL AND POSTPARTUM PERIODS.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of clause (5) of the first sentence of subsection (b), services described in this subsection are screening services provided to an individual who is eligible for such assistance on the basis of being pregnant that include at a minimum—

“(A) during the perinatal period, at least 1 screening for depression and anxiety symptoms using a standardized, validated tool; and

“(B) during the postpartum period, a full assessment of mood and emotional well-being, including screening for postpartum depression and anxiety, using a standardized, validated tool.

“(2) EXCLUSION FROM TERRITORIAL CAPS.—The additional amount paid to a territory for expenditures for medical assistance for services described in paragraph (1) as a result of the application of clause (5) of the first sentence of subsection (b) shall not be taken into account for purposes of applying payment limits under subsections (f) and (g) of section 1108.”

(b) CHIP.—Section 2105(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397ee(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(13) ENHANCED PAYMENT FOR DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY SCREENING DURING THE PERINATAL AND POSTPARTUM PERIODS.—Notwithstanding subsection (b), the enhanced FMAP with respect to payments under subsection (a) for expenditures under the State child health plan (or a waiver of such plan) shall be increased by 1 percentage point with respect to expenditures for services described in section 1905(mm)(1) that are provided under the plan (or waiver) to an individual who is eligible for such assistance on the basis of being pregnant (including pregnancy-related assistance provided to a targeted low-income pregnant woman (as defined in section 2112(d)), pregnancy-related assistance provided to an individual who is eligible for such assistance through application of section 1903(v)(4)(A)(i) under section 2107(e)(1), or any other assistance under the plan (or waiver) provided to an individual who is eligible for such assistance on the basis of being pregnant) and during the 12-month period that begins on the last day of the individual’s pregnancy and ends on the last day of the month in which such 12-month period ends (including any such assistance provided during the month in which such period ends).”

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the first day of the first fiscal quarter that begins on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this section.

SEC. 205. PRESUMPTIVE ELIGIBILITY FOR PREGNANT INDIVIDUALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Section 1920(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-1(a)) is amended by striking “may provide” and inserting “shall provide”.

(2) APPLICATION.—Section 1920 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-1) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(f) APPLICATION.—A State shall provide to a pregnant woman a presumptive eligibility period in accordance with this section without regard to whether the individual would otherwise qualify for a presumptive eligibility period the State has elected to provide under section 1920A, 1920B, or 1920C.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 1902(a)(47) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(47)) is amended to read as follows:

“(47) provide—

“(A)(i) for making ambulatory prenatal care available to pregnant women during a presumptive eligibility period in accordance with section 1920; and

“(ii) at the option of the State—

“(I) for making medical assistance for items and services described in subsection (a) of section 1920A available to children during a presumptive eligibility period in accordance with such section;

“(II) for making medical assistance available to individuals described in subsection (a) of section 1920B during a presumptive eligibility period in accordance with such section; and

“(III) for making medical assistance available to individuals described in subsection (a) of section 1920C during a presumptive eligibility period in accordance with such section; and

“(B) that any hospital that is a participating provider under the State plan may elect to be a qualified entity for purposes of determining, on the basis of preliminary information, whether any individual is eligible for medical assistance under the State plan or under a waiver of the plan for purposes of providing the individual with medical assistance during a presumptive eligibility period, in the same manner, and subject to the same requirements, as apply with respect to populations described in section 1920, 1920A, 1920B, or 1920C (without regard to whether the State has elected to provide for a presumptive eligibility period under sections 1920A, 1920B, or 1920C), subject to such guidance as the Secretary shall establish.”

(2) Section 1920(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-1(e)) is amended—

(A) by striking “If the State has elected the option to provide a presumptive eligibility period under this section or section 1920A, the” and inserting “The”; and

(B) by striking “1920A, subject to” and inserting “1920A (if the State has elected the option, subject to”.

(3) Section 2107(e)(1)(U) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)(R)) is amended by inserting “1920 (relating to presumptive eligibility for pregnant women and section” before “1920A”.

(4) Section 2112(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 13971l(c)) is amended—

(A) in the heading, by striking “OPTION TO PROVIDE”; and

(B) by striking “may elect” and inserting “shall elect”.

TITLE III—INVEST IN THE MATERNAL HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE

SEC. 301. EMERGENCY OBSTETRIC WORKFORCE SUPPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 203A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 204a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “and urgent maternal health care needs” after “public health care needs”;

(B) in paragraph (3), by inserting “or urgent maternal health care need” after “public health care need”;

(C) in paragraph (5)—

(i) in subparagraph (C), by striking “or” at the end;

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

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) any urgent need, not rising to the level of an emergency described in subparagraph (D), that, in the judgment of the Secretary, if not addressed, could result in an emergency that would be appropriate for the deployment of the Commissioned Corps.”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) URGENT MATERNAL HEALTH CARE NEED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section and section 214, the term ‘urgent maternal health care need’, with respect to an area, means a maternal health care need, as determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Attorney General, arising as a result of the closure or imminent closure of a hospital or other health care facility in such area, or the loss of workers employed by such hospital or health care facility who are trained to provide maternal health care services.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining whether there is an urgent maternal health care need for purposes of subparagraph (A) with respect to an area, the Secretary shall consider whether such closure, imminent closure, or loss of workers has impacted access by individuals in such area to a full range of maternal health care services, including prenatal services, labor and delivery services, postnatal services, maternal and postpartum mental health services, behavioral health services, and reproductive health services.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or urgent maternal health care needs” after “public health care needs”; and

(B) in each of paragraphs (2) and (4)(B), by inserting “or urgent maternal health care need” after “public health care need”; and

(3) in subsection (c), by inserting “or urgent maternal health care need” after “public health care need”.

(b) DETAIL OF PERSONNEL.—Section 214 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 215) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f);

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

“(e)(1) Upon the request of an eligible entity with respect to a hospital or other health care facility the closure, imminent closure, or loss of workers of which led to an urgent maternal health care need in an area, personnel may be detailed by the Secretary for the purpose of assisting such eligible entity in work related to such urgent maternal health care need.

“(2)(A) Personnel detailed under paragraph (1) shall be paid from applicable appropriations of the Service.

“(B) In the case of detail of personnel under paragraph (1) to be paid from applicable Service appropriations, the Secretary may condition such detail on an agreement by the eligible entity concerned that such eligible entity concerned shall reimburse the United States for a portion of the amount of such payments made by the Service.

“(C) The services of personnel while detailed pursuant to this subsection shall be considered as having been performed in the Service for purposes of the computation of basic pay, promotion, retirement, compensation for injury or death, and the benefits provided by section 212.

“(3) The Secretary may condition a detail of personnel under paragraph (1) on an agreement by the eligible entity concerned that such eligible entity concerned shall—

“(A) in the case of an imminent closure or a loss of workers, as determined by the Secretary—

“(i) maintain the maternal health care services in the applicable area to the maximum extent practicable, including by hiring temporary workers, until the date on which the personnel are detailed to such area; and

“(ii) submit to the Secretary a plan for hiring and retaining health practitioners in the short- and long-term, both during periods in which personnel are detailed to such applicable area and periods in which personnel are not detailed to such applicable area;

“(B) in the case of a closure, submit to the Secretary a plan for working with, as applicable, State and local agencies and local stakeholders to transition patients to alternate sources of safe maternal health care services; and

“(C) commit to an assessment by the Secretary of the workplace practices of such eligible entity concerned, if applicable.

“(4) In this subsection—

“(A) the term ‘eligible entity’ means—

“(i) a State;

“(ii) a political subdivision of a State; or

“(iii) a Tribal, nonprofit, or other health care entity; and

“(B) the term ‘personnel’ means an employee or officer of the Commissioned Corps.”; and

(3) in subsection (f) (as so redesignated), by inserting “or an urgent maternal health care need” before the period at the end.

(c) FUNDING FOR COMMISSIONED CORPS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE.—Section 203 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 204) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) OPERATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONED CORPS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out duties and responsibilities relating to the operations of the Commissioned Corps of the Service, including the following:

“(A) Enhance the processes and systems of the Service’s Headquarters operations.

“(B) Maximize the force management, required training opportunities (as determined by the Secretary under section 203A(a)(1)), operational capacity, and mission readiness of the Regular Corps, the Ready Reserve Corps, and the Public Health Emergency Response Strike Teams, a subcomponent of the Regular Corps.

“(C) Recruit and retain qualified professionals suited to serving underserved and vulnerable communities by—

“(i) improving onboarding timelines, providing officer placements to align with mission needs, ensuring adequate officer morale and wellness resources, and incentivizing recruiters and recruits; and

“(ii) expanding training opportunities, including training of personnel to deliver maternal health care services, providing credentialing support for high demand skill sets, and enriching leadership and research potential.

“(D) Improve deployment processes and prepare mission teams to execute routine and emergent public health events.

“(E) Establish a legislative liaison office to carry out legislative affairs functions under the direction of the Secretary.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated for the Commissioned Corps of the Service, there is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out paragraph (1) \$150,000,000 for fiscal year 2027 and each fiscal year thereafter.”.

SEC. 302. STREAMLINED SCREENING AND ENROLLMENT OF PROVIDERS OF MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES IN NEIGHBORING STATES.

(a) APPLICATION TO MEDICAID.—Section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(11) STREAMLINED ENROLLMENT PROCESS FOR ELIGIBLE OUT-OF-STATE PROVIDERS OF MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State adopts and implements a process that enables an eligible out-of-State provider to enroll as a provider in the State plan without imposing any screening requirements that are in addition to the requirements imposed on in-State providers. An eligible out-of-State provider that enrolls in the State plan through such process shall be so enrolled for a 5-year period (unless the provider is terminated or excluded from participation during such period) and may revalidate such enrollment through such process for subsequent 5-year periods.

“(B) ELIGIBLE OUT-OF-STATE PROVIDER.—In this paragraph, the term ‘eligible out-of-State provider’ means, with respect to a State, a provider—

“(i) that furnishes maternity, labor, and delivery services (as defined in subsection (zz)(1)), or provides orders or referrals for such services, for which payment is available under the State plan of the State;

“(ii) that is located in a neighboring State (as defined by the Secretary);

“(iii) with respect to which the Secretary has determined there is a limited risk of fraud, waste, or abuse for purposes of determining the level of screening to be conducted under section 1866(j)(2)(B);

“(iv) that has been screened under such section 1866(j)(2)(B) for purposes of enrolling in the Medicare program under title XVIII or the State plan of the State in which such provider is located; and

“(v) that has not been excluded from participation in the Medicare program under such title or the Medicaid program under this title.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 1902(a)(77) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(77)) is amended by inserting “enrollment,” after “screening.”.

(2) Section 1902(kk) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)), as amended by subsection (a), is further amended—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting “ENROLLMENT,” after “SCREENING.”; and

(B) in paragraph (9), by striking “Nothing” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (10), nothing”.

(c) APPLICATION TO CHIP.—Section 2107(e)(1)(H) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)(G)) is amended by inserting “enrollment,” after “screening.”.

(d) GUIDANCE ON SCREENING AND ENROLLING OUT-OF-STATE PROVIDERS OF MATERNITY, LABOR, AND DELIVERY SERVICES.—Not later than January 1, 2028, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall issue (and update as the Secretary determines necessary) guidance to State Medicaid and CHIP directors on best practices for screening and enrolling out-of-State providers of maternity, labor, and delivery services in accordance with paragraph (10) of section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)) and section 2107(e)(1)(H) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)(G)) (as added and amended by this section) and including best practices for screening and enrolling out-of-State providers in managed care plans.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section take effect on January 1, 2028.

TITLE IV—REQUIRING PUBLIC COMMUNICATION OF OBSTETRICS DATA AND UNIT CLOSURES

SEC. 401. TIMELY NOTIFICATIONS OF IMPENDING HOSPITAL OBSTETRIC UNIT CLOSURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1866(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395cc(a)(1)) is amended—

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

(2) in subparagraph (Y)(ii)(V), by striking the period and inserting “, and”; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (Y) the following new subparagraph:

“(Z) beginning 180 days after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph, in the case of a hospital, not less than 180 days prior to the closure of any obstetric unit of the hospital, to submit to the Secretary, any relevant local and State agencies, and the community a notification, which shall include—

“(i) a report analyzing the impact the closure will have on the community, including data on any adverse outcomes and increase in costs relating to obstetric services for such community;

“(ii) steps the hospital will take to identify other health care providers that can alleviate any service gaps as a result of the closure;

“(iii) the cause of the closure of such obstetric unit;

“(iv) data regarding historic transportation costs related to obstetric services in such community; and

“(v) any additional information as may be required by the Secretary.”.

(b) STATE REQUIREMENT TO POST REPORTS.—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)), as amended by section 201(a)(1), is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (90), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (91), by striking the period at the end and inserting “, and”; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (91) the following new paragraph:

“(92) provide that the State will make publicly available, on the website of any relevant State agency, any report received by the State from a hospital pursuant to section 1866(a)(1)(Z)(i).”;

SEC. 402. COLLECTION OF DATA RELATING TO HOSPITAL LABOR AND DELIVERY SERVICES.

Section 1866(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395cc(a)(1)), as amended by section 401, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (Y)(ii)(V), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (Z), by striking the period and inserting “, and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(AA) in the case of a hospital, to include in cost reports submitted under this title for cost reporting periods beginning on or after July 1, 2026—

“(i) the number of births that occurred at such hospital during the cost reporting period, delineated by the number of cesarean births and vaginal births;

“(ii) the number of antenatal and postpartum transfers from the hospital to other hospitals;

“(iii) data on the number and characteristics of the staff providing labor and delivery services at such hospital;

“(iv) the expenses the hospital incurred for providing labor and delivery services at such hospital, including nursing care, anesthesia, and operating room services;

“(v) the amount the hospital spent for on-call coverage for labor and delivery services by physicians and midwives; and

“(vi) the amount and sources of revenue received by such hospital for labor and delivery services, including payments received from—

“(I) items and services furnished to individuals eligible for coverage under a State plan under title XIX (or a waiver of such a plan);

“(II) items and services furnished to individuals with other forms of health insurance or third-party coverage; and

“(III) items and services furnished to individuals without health insurance or other source of third party coverage.”.

SA 4689. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ ABILITY TO INITIATE GRAND JURY PROCEEDINGS AND SEEK SUBPOENAS, ARREST WARRANTS, OR SEARCH WARRANTS INVOLVING ELECTIONS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) UNITED STATES ATTORNEY.—The term “United States attorney” means a United States attorney appointed under section 541 of title 28, United States Code.

(2) ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEY.—The term “assistant United States attorney” means an assistant United States attorney appointed under section 542 of title 28, United States Code.

(b) VIOLATIONS OF ELECTIONS LAWS.—

(1) WARRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Arrest warrants and search warrants relating to an alleged violation of section 301 of the Civil Rights Act of 1960 (52 U.S.C. 20701) or section 12 of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (52 U.S.C. 20511) may only be requested by a United States attorney who is confirmed by the Senate and who is appointed to the judicial district in which the alleged violation took place.

(B) EXCEPTION.—For a judicial district in which a United States attorney has not yet been confirmed by the Senate, the assistant United States attorney for that judicial district with the longest tenure in that judicial district, not including service in other jurisdictions, shall be designated to carry out the authorities under subparagraph (A), and such authorities shall terminate upon confirmation of a United States attorney for that judicial district.

(2) GRAND JURY PROCEEDINGS.—A grand jury proceeding and any subpoena relating to the grand jury proceeding for an alleged violation of section 301 of the Civil Rights Act of 1960 (52 U.S.C. 20701) or section 12 of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (52 U.S.C. 20511) may only be initiated by a United States attorney who is confirmed by the Senate and appointed to the judicial district in which the alleged violation took place, or an assistant United States attorney with a tenure of at least 5 years in the judicial district in which the alleged violation took place.

SA 4690. Mr. KAINÉ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ EXEMPTION FROM CERTAIN DUTIES FOR IMPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Any duty imposed under section 122 or 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2132 and 2411) on or after February 20, 2026, shall not apply to any article imported

from a member country of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

(b) REFUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 514 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1514) or any other provision of law, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, refund, with interest, to each importer of an article described in subsection (a) all duties described in that subsection and paid with respect to the article.

(2) RELIQUIDATION AUTHORITY.—In the case of an entry of an article described in subsection (a) that was liquidated before the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner shall reliquidate the entry at the rate of duty applicable to the article in the absence of any duty described in subsection (a) in order to pay a refund required under that subsection.

(c) TERMINATION.—The exemption under subsection (a) terminates on the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) ENTRY DEFINED.—In this section, the term “entry” includes a withdrawal from warehouse for consumption.

SA 4691. Mr. KAINÉ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ EXEMPTION OF BABY AND INFANT-RELATED PRODUCTS FROM CERTAIN DUTIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Any duty imposed under section 122 or 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2132 and 2411) on or after February 20, 2026, shall not apply to the following articles:

(1) Car child safety seats classified under statistical reporting number 9401.80.6021 or 9401.80.6023 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States.

(2) Diapers classified under statistical reporting number 9619.00.1530 of that Schedule.

(3) Cribs classified under statistical reporting number 9403.89.6003 of that Schedule.

(4) Strollers classified under subheading 8715.00.00 of that Schedule.

(b) REFUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 514 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1514) or any other provision of law, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, refund, with interest, to each importer of an article described in subsection (a) all duties described in that subsection and paid with respect to the article.

(2) RELIQUIDATION AUTHORITY.—In the case of an entry of an article described in subsection (a) that was liquidated before the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner shall reliquidate the entry at the rate of duty applicable to the article in the absence of any duty described in subsection (a) in order to pay a refund required under that subsection.

(c) TERMINATION.—The exemption under subsection (a) terminates on the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) ENTRY DEFINED.—In this section, the term “entry” includes a withdrawal from warehouse for consumption.

SA 4692. Mr. KAINÉ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ EXEMPTION OF COFFEE, TEA, COCOA, AND SIMILAR ITEMS FROM CERTAIN DUTIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Any duty imposed under section 122 or 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2132 and 2411) on or after February 20, 2026, shall not apply to any article classified under chapter 9 or 18 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States.

(b) REFUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 514 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1514) or any other provision of law, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, refund, with interest, to each importer of an article described in subsection (a) all duties described in that subsection and paid with respect to the article.

(2) RELIQUIDATION AUTHORITY.—In the case of an entry of an article described in subsection (a) that was liquidated before the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner shall reliquidate the entry at the rate of duty applicable to the article in the absence of any duty described in subsection (a) in order to pay a refund required under that subsection.

(c) TERMINATION.—The exemption under subsection (a) terminates on the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) ENTRY DEFINED.—In this section, the term “entry” includes a withdrawal from warehouse for consumption.

SA 4693. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ EXEMPTION OF FERTILIZERS FROM CERTAIN DUTIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Any duty imposed under section 122 or 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2132 and 2411) on or after February 20, 2026, shall not apply to any article classified under chapter 31 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States.

(b) REFUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 514 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1514) or any other provision of law, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, refund, with interest, to each importer of an article described in subsection (a) all duties described in that subsection and paid with respect to the article.

(2) RELIQUIDATION AUTHORITY.—In the case of an entry of an article described in subsection (a) that was liquidated before the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner shall reliquidate the entry at the rate of duty applicable to the article in the absence of any duty described in subsection (a) in order to pay a refund required under that subsection.

(c) TERMINATION.—The exemption under subsection (a) terminates on the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) ENTRY DEFINED.—In this section, the term “entry” includes a withdrawal from warehouse for consumption.

SA 4694. Mr. KIM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE IV—EFFECTIVE DATE

SEC. 401. EFFECTIVE DATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the provisions of and amendments made by this Act not apply before the date on which all States have submitted the report described in subsection (b).

(b) ACCESSIBILITY REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, each State shall submit to the Election Assistance Commission a report describing the specific reasonable accommodations the State will provide to meet the requirements of section 6(e)(3) of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, as added by section 101(d)(4), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

SA 4695. Mr. KIM (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ MINIMUM WAGE AND OVERTIME FOR CERTAIN CAREGIVERS.

(a) EXEMPTION AMENDMENTS.—Section 13 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 213) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(15), by striking “casual basis in domestic service employment” and all that follows through “of the Secretary” and inserting the following: “casual basis to provide babysitting services”; and

(2) by repealing subsection (b)(21).

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 3 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(z) ‘Babysitting services’—

“(1) means the custodial care and protection of infants or children in or about a private home in which the infants or children reside; and

“(2) does not include services relating to the care and protection of infants or children which are performed by trained personnel, such as registered, vocational, or practical nurses, and home care workers, including home health aides and personal care aides.

“(aa) ‘Casual basis’, with respect to the provision of babysitting services—

“(1) means employment which is irregular or intermittent (as defined and delimited by the Secretary), and which is not performed by an individual whose vocation is babysitting; and

“(2) may include the performance of household work not related to the provision of babysitting services, so long as the time performing such work does not exceed 20 percent of the total hours worked while providing babysitting services.”

SA 4696. Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4420 pro-

posed by Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCHMITT) to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, insert the following:

Subtitle D—Protecting Pregnant and Postpartum Voters

SEC. 131. PROTECTING PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM VOTERS.

(a) REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, subject to paragraph (2), the provisions of and the amendments made by this title shall not apply before the date that is 2 years after the date on which the following have been submitted to Congress:

(A) A certification by the Election Assistance Commission (in this section referred to as the “Commission”) meeting the requirements of subsection (b).

(B) The findings of each member of the Commission with respect to the matters required to be certified under such subsection (b).

(2) EXTENSION.—

(A) SUBMISSION OF REQUEST.—The chief State election official of a State may submit to the Commission a request up to a 1-year extension of the applicable date under paragraph (1) with respect to the State.

(B) CONSIDERATION.—The Commission may grant such extension upon a finding of good cause that the State is not yet operationally ready to implement this title without materially impairing pregnant or postpartum voters.

(b) CERTIFICATION.—A certification under subsection (a)(1)(A) meets the requirements of this subsection if such certification includes—

(1) a certification by the Commission that such provisions and amendments will not materially impair, delay, burden, or reduce the ability of pregnant or postpartum voters to participate in elections for Federal office;

(2) a State-by-State review of how such provisions and amendments would affect emergency absentee voting and ballot-cure options for voters who are hospitalized, on bed rest, in labor, or recovering from childbirth;

(3) a determination that, before implementation, each State has procedures in place to ensure pregnant or postpartum voters including those hospitalized, on bed rest, in labor, or recovering from childbirth can request, receive, cast, return, and cure an absentee ballot through emergency or expedited processes; and

(4) a determination that Congress has appropriated funding specifically for State implementation of this title, including funding for election official training, voter education, and any required safeguards or accommodations.

(c) PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.—The proposed certification and supporting materials shall be published in the Federal Register and subject to a 60-day public comment period before submission to Congress.

SA 4697. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . TARIFF RELIEF FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.

The unobligated balances of amounts appropriated under section 100052 of the Act entitled “An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14”, approved July 4, 2025 (Public Law 119-21; 139 Stat. 387) (commonly known as the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”) shall be transferred to the Administrator of the Small Business Administration and shall be available to the Administrator to provide assistance to small business concerns (as defined under section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632)) that have been impacted by tariffs imposed by the Federal Government.

SA 4698. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . USE OF UNOBLIGATED IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT FUNDS TO PAY INTEREST ON ILLEGALLY IMPOSED DUTIES.

The unobligated balances of amounts appropriated for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement under section 100052 of the Act entitled “An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14” (Public Law 119-21; 139 Stat. 387) (commonly known as the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”), shall be transferred to the Secretary of the Treasury and available to pay to importers interest incurred on amounts collected from such importers as duties illegally imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

SA 4699. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDING.

The unobligated balances of amounts appropriated under section 100052 of the Act entitled “An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14”, approved July 4, 2025 (Public Law 119-21; 139 Stat. 387) (commonly known as the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”), shall be transferred to the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development and shall be available to the Assistant Secretary to provide assistance under section 209(c)(2) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3149(c)(2)).

SA 4700. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE.

The unobligated balances of amounts appropriated under section 100052 of the Act entitled “An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14”, ap-

proved July 4, 2025 (Public Law 119-21; 139 Stat. 387) (commonly known as the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”) shall be transferred to the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and shall be available to the Administrator to provide assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) for major disasters.

SA 4701. Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . TREATMENT OF ORPHAN DRUGS UNDER THE MEDICARE DRUG PRICE NEGOTIATION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1192(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320f-1(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “through (4)” and inserting “and (3)”;

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by striking subparagraph (A);

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively; and

(C) in subparagraph (A)(iii), as redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, by striking “with respect to” and inserting “subject to paragraph (4), with respect to”; and

(3) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(4) TREATMENT OF ORPHAN DRUGS.—In the case of a drug that is designated as a drug for one or more rare diseases or conditions and for which the only approved indication (or indications) is for one or more such rare diseases or conditions (as such term is defined in section 526(a)(2) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act), paragraph (3)(A) shall be applied by substituting ‘\$400,000,000’ for ‘\$200,000,000’ in clause (i) of such paragraph.”

(b) APPLICATION.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to initial price applicability years (as defined in section 1191(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320f(b))) beginning on or after January 1, 2028.

SA 4702. Mr. WELCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REPEAL OF CHANGES TO MEDICAID COST SHARING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 71120 of the Act titled “An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14” (Public Law 119-21) is repealed and title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) shall be applied as if such section and the amendments made by such section had not been enacted.

(b) RESCISSION.—The amounts appropriated under section 71120(c) of the Act titled “An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14” (Public Law 119-21) are hereby rescinded.

SEC. ____ . REPEAL OF CHANGES TO EXCLUSION FOR ORPHAN DRUGS UNDER THE DRUG PRICE NEGOTIATION PROGRAM.

Section 71203 of the Act titled “An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14” (Public Law 119-21) is repealed and title XI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1301 et seq.) shall be applied as if such section and the amendments made by such section had not been enacted.

SA 4703. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . LOAN LIMITS.

Section 455(a)(4) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(a)(4)) is amended—

(1) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) ANNUAL LIMITS BEGINNING JULY 1, 2026.—Subject to paragraphs (7)(A) and (8), beginning on July 1, 2026, the maximum annual amount of Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford loans that a graduate student or professional student may borrow in any academic year or its equivalent shall be \$50,000.”; and

(2) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

“(B) AGGREGATE LIMITS.—Subject to paragraphs (6), (7)(A), and (8), beginning on July 1, 2026, the maximum aggregate amount of Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford loans, in addition to the amount borrowed for undergraduate education, that a graduate student or professional student may borrow for any program of study described in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (C) shall be \$200,000.”

SA 4704. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . MAINTAINING FUNDING FOR CERTAIN EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CRITICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM.—The term “critical education program” means each of the following:

(A) The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.).

(B) Part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311 et seq.).

(C) Part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6361 et seq.).

(D) Part C of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6391 et seq.).

(E) Part D of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6421 et seq.).

(F) Part A of title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6611 et seq.).

(G) Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6801 et seq.).

(H) Part A of title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.).

(I) Part B of title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7171 et seq.).

(J) Part B of title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7341 et seq.).

(K) Part A of title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.).

(L) Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.).

(M) Subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.).

(2) REDUCTION IN FUNDING.—The term “reduction in funding”, when used with respect to a critical education program for a fiscal year, means the amount by which—

(A) the total amount of funding appropriated for the critical education program for fiscal year 2024 under title III of division D of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-47; 138 Stat. 681), which shall be determined based on the funding allocation specified for the critical education program in the explanatory statement described in section 4 of such Act (Public Law 118-47; 138 Stat. 461); exceeds

(B) the total amount of funding appropriated for the critical education program for the fiscal year for which the determination is being made under the applicable regular appropriation Act for such fiscal year, which shall be determined based on the funding allocation specified for the critical education program in the explanatory statement regarding such regular appropriation Act.

(3) REGULAR APPROPRIATION ACT.—The term “regular appropriation Act”—

(A) means an annual appropriation Act providing new budget authority (as defined in section 3 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 622)) for the programs, projects, and activities under the jurisdiction of a subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate through September 30 of a fiscal year; and

(B) includes—

(i) an Act referred to in section 105 of title 1, United States Code;

(ii) a title, division, or other subdivision of an Act or resolution that, if it were a separate Act, would be an Act described in subparagraph (A); and

(iii) a resolution or Act, or a title, division, or other subdivision of a resolution or Act, making continuing appropriations through September 30 of a fiscal year.

(b) ENSURING ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR CRITICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2026, 2027, and 2028, effective on the date that is 30 days after the later of the date of enactment of this Act or the date of enactment of a regular appropriation Act appropriating funding for all critical education programs for such fiscal year, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for each critical education program an amount equal to any reduction in funding for the critical education program for such fiscal year.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year shall remain available until expended.

(c) BUDGETARY EFFECTS.—

(1) STATUTORY PAYGO SCORECARDS.—The budgetary effects of this section shall not be entered on either PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 4(d) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(d)).

(2) SENATE PAYGO SCORECARDS.—The budgetary effects of this section shall not be entered on any PAYGO scorecard maintained for purposes of section 4106 of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress).

SA 4705. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ RIGHT TO CONTRACEPTION ACT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CONTRACEPTION.—The term “contraception” means an action taken to prevent pregnancy, including the use of contraceptives or fertility-awareness-based methods and sterilization procedures.

(2) CONTRACEPTIVE.—The term “contraceptive” means any drug, device, or biological product intended for use in the prevention of pregnancy, whether specifically intended to prevent pregnancy or for other health needs, that is approved, cleared, authorized, or licensed under section 505, 510(k), 513(f)(2), 515, or 564 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355, 360(k), 360c(f)(2), 360e, 360bbb-3) or section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262).

(3) GOVERNMENT.—The term “government” includes each branch, department, agency, instrumentality, and official of the United States or a State.

(4) HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.—The term “health care provider” means any entity or individual (including any physician, certified nurse-midwife, nurse, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, and pharmacist) that is licensed or otherwise authorized by a State to provide health care services.

(5) STATE.—The term “State” includes each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, each territory and possession of the United States, and each Indian Tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)), and any political subdivision of any of the foregoing, including any unit of local government, such as a county, city, town, village, or other general purpose political subdivision of a State.

(b) PERMITTED SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An individual has a statutory right under this section to obtain contraceptives and to voluntarily engage in contraception, free from coercion, and a health care provider has a corresponding right to provide contraceptives, contraception, and information, referrals, and services related to contraception.

(2) LIMITATIONS OR REQUIREMENTS.—The statutory rights specified in paragraph (1) shall not be limited or otherwise infringed through any limitation or requirement that—

(A) expressly, effectively, implicitly, or as-implemented singles out—

(i) the provision of contraceptives, contraception, or contraception-related information;

(ii) health care providers who provide contraceptives, contraception, or contraception-related information; or

(iii) facilities in which contraceptives, contraception, or contraception-related information is provided; and

(B) impedes access to contraceptives, contraception, or contraception-related information.

(3) EXCEPTION.—To defend against a claim that a limitation or requirement violates a health care provider’s or individual’s statutory rights under paragraph (2), a party must establish, by clear and convincing evidence, that—

(A) the limitation or requirement significantly advances access to contraceptives,

contraception, and information related to contraception; and

(B) access to contraceptives, contraception, and information related to contraception or the health of patients cannot be advanced by a less restrictive alternative measure or action.

(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, to approve, clear, authorize, or license contraceptives under section 505, 510(k), 513(f)(2), 515, or 564 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355, 360(k), 360c(f)(2), 360e, 360bbb-3) or section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262), or for the Federal Government to enforce such approval, clearance, authorization, or licensure.

(c) APPLICABILITY AND PREEMPTION.—

(1) GENERAL APPLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), this section supersedes and applies to the law of the Federal Government and each State, and the implementation of such law, whether statutory, common law, or otherwise, and whether adopted before or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) PROHIBITION.—Neither the Federal Government nor any State may administer, implement, or enforce any law, rule, regulation, standard, or other provision having the force and effect of law in a manner that—

(i) prohibits or restricts the sale, provision, or use of any contraceptives;

(ii) prohibits or restricts any individual from aiding another individual in voluntarily obtaining or using any contraceptives or contraceptive methods; or

(iii) exempts any contraceptives or contraceptive methods from any other generally applicable law in a way that would make it more difficult to sell, provide, obtain, or use such contraceptives or contraceptive methods.

(C) RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER LAWS.—This section applies notwithstanding any other provision of Federal law, including the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 2000bb et seq.).

(2) SUBSEQUENTLY ENACTED FEDERAL LEGISLATION.—Federal law enacted after the date of enactment of this Act is subject to this section, unless such law explicitly excludes such application by reference to this section.

(3) LIMITATIONS.—The provisions of this section shall not supersede or otherwise affect any provision of Federal law relating to coverage under (and shall not be construed as requiring the provision of specific benefits under) group health plans or group or individual health insurance coverage or coverage under a Federal health care program (as defined in section 1128B(f) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a-7b(f))), including coverage provided under section 1905(a)(4)(C) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(a)(4)(C)) and section 2713 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg-13).

(4) DEFENSE.—In any cause of action against an individual or entity who is subject to a limitation or requirement that violates this section, in addition to the remedies specified in subsection (e), this section shall also apply to, and may be raised as a defense by, such an individual or entity.

(5) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect immediately upon the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section shall be construed—

(A) to authorize any government to interfere with a health care provider’s ability to provide contraceptives or information related to contraception or a patient’s ability

to obtain contraceptives or to engage in contraception; or

(B) to permit or sanction the conduct of any sterilization procedure without the patient's voluntary and informed consent.

(2) OTHER INDIVIDUALS CONSIDERED AS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.—Any individual who, by operation of a provision of Federal or State law, is permitted to implement or enforce a limitation or requirement that violates subsection (b) shall be considered a government official for purposes of this section.

(e) ENFORCEMENT.—

(1) ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The Attorney General may commence a civil action on behalf of the United States against any State that violates, or against any government official (including an individual described in subsection (d)(2)) that implements or enforces a limitation or requirement that violates, subsection (b). The court shall hold unlawful and set aside the limitation or requirement if it is in violation of this section.

(2) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any individual or entity, including any health care provider or patient, adversely affected by an alleged violation of this section, may commence a civil action against any State that violates, or against any government official (including an individual described in subsection (d)(2)) that implements or enforces a limitation or requirement that violates, subsection (b). The court shall hold unlawful and set aside the limitation or requirement if it is in violation of this section.

(B) HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.—A health care provider may commence an action for relief on its own behalf, on behalf of the provider's staff, and on behalf of the provider's patients who are or may be adversely affected by an alleged violation of this section.

(3) EQUITABLE RELIEF.—In any action under this subsection, the court may award appropriate equitable relief, including temporary, preliminary, and permanent injunctive relief.

(4) COSTS.—In any action under this subsection, the court shall award costs of litigation, as well as reasonable attorney's fees, to any prevailing plaintiff. A plaintiff shall not be liable to a defendant for costs or attorney's fees in any nonfrivolous action under this subsection.

(5) JURISDICTION.—The district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction over proceedings under this section and shall exercise the same without regard to whether the party aggrieved shall have exhausted any administrative or other remedies that may be provided for by law.

(6) ABROGATION OF STATE IMMUNITY.—Neither a State that enforces or maintains, nor a government official (including an individual described in subsection (d)(2)) who is permitted to implement or enforce any limitation or requirement that violates subsection (b) shall be immune under the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the Eleventh Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, or any other source of law, from an action in a Federal or State court of competent jurisdiction challenging that limitation or requirement.

SA 4706. Mr. KIM (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Nurses Belong in Nursing Homes Act".

SEC. 2. NURSE STAFFING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) ESTABLISHING TOTAL NURSE STAFFING HOURS PER RESIDENT DAY; REQUIRING 24-HOUR USE OF REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL NURSES IN NURSING HOMES; REMOVAL OF WAIVER AUTHORITY.—

(1) MEDICARE.—Section 1819(b)(4) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i-3(b)(4)) is amended by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) REQUIRED NURSING CARE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A skilled nursing facility must provide—

“(I) 24-hour licensed nursing services which are sufficient to meet the nursing needs of its residents;

“(II) not later than the date described in clause (iii), a minimum staffing requirement of at least 3.48 hours per resident day (or the number of hours per resident day recommended in the report most recently submitted by the Secretary under section 1128L(b)(2), provided that such number is at least 3.48 hours per resident day) of nursing care provided by a combination of a registered professional nurse, licensed practical nurse (or licensed vocational nurse), or certified nursing assistant that—

“(aa) provides direct care services to residents in a skilled nursing facility; and

“(bb) reflects an appropriate combination of competencies and skills that is sufficient to ensure the safety of each resident in the facility; and

“(III) the services of a registered professional nurse, such that such services are furnished—

“(aa) before the date described in clause (iii), at least 8 consecutive hours a day, 7 days a week; and

“(bb) on or after such date, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

“(ii) DEFINITION OF HOURS PER RESIDENT DAY.—In this subparagraph, the term ‘hours per resident day’ means the total number of hours worked by each type of staff described in clause (i)(II) divided by the total number of residents, as calculated by the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

“(iii) DATE DESCRIBED.—For purposes of subclauses (II) and (III) of clause (i), the date described in this clause is the date that is 180 days after the date of enactment of the Nurses Belong in Nursing Homes Act.”.

(2) MEDICAID.—Section 1919(b)(4) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r(b)(4)) is amended by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) REQUIRED NURSING CARE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A nursing facility must provide—

“(I) 24-hour licensed nursing services which are sufficient to meet the nursing needs of its residents;

“(II) not later than the date described in section 1819(b)(4)(C)(iii), a minimum staffing requirement of at least 3.48 hours per resident day (or the number of hours per resident day recommended in the report most recently submitted by the Secretary under section 1128L(b)(2), provided that such number is at least 3.48 hours per resident day) of nursing care provided by a combination of a registered professional nurse, licensed practical nurse (or licensed vocational nurse), or certified nursing assistant that—

“(aa) provides direct care services to residents in a nursing facility; and

“(bb) reflects an appropriate combination of competencies and skills that is sufficient to ensure the safety of each resident in the facility; and

“(III) the services of a registered professional nurse, such that such services are furnished—

“(aa) before the date described in section 1819(b)(4)(C)(ii), at least 8 consecutive hours a day, 7 days a week; and

“(bb) on or after such date, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

“(ii) DEFINITION OF HOURS PER RESIDENT DAY.—In this subparagraph, the term ‘hours per resident day’ has the meaning given such term in section 1819(b)(4)(C)(ii).”.

(b) STUDY.—Title XI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1301 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1128K the following new section:

“SEC. 1128L. STUDY AND REPORTS RECOMMENDING MINIMUM STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES AND NURSING FACILITIES; PROMULGATION OF REGULATIONS.

“(a) STUDY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, and not less frequently than once every 4 years thereafter, the Secretary shall direct the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, the Comptroller General, or the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, in consultation with the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (in this section referred to as the ‘designated entity’), to complete a study analyzing nurse staffing requirements at skilled nursing facilities (as defined in section 1819(a)) and nursing facilities (as defined in section 1919(a)) to provide care to individuals seeking their services.

“(2) CONTENTS.—With respect to each study required under paragraph (1), the designated entity shall—

“(A) consult with—

“(i) residents, family members of residents, or authorized representatives of residents;

“(ii) registered professional nurses, licensed practical nurses (or licensed vocational nurses), certified nursing assistants, and other categories of direct care professionals (as determined by the Secretary) who work at such skilled nursing facilities or nursing facilities;

“(iii) collective bargaining units or unions that represent direct care workers or direct care professionals who work at such skilled nursing facilities and nursing facilities;

“(iv) operators of nursing facilities and skilled nursing facilities;

“(v) researchers with expertise in the nursing home and long-term care workforce, including the disclosure of funding sources for previously conducted research and conflicts of interest; and

“(vi) long-term care ombudsmen; and

“(B) address the following:

“(i) Whether the minimum staffing requirements established in sections 1819(b)(4)(C)(i)(II) and 1919(b)(4)(C)(i)(II) should be maintained or increased (but in no event decreased below a minimum staffing requirement of at least 3.48 hours per resident day), based on the severity of the health conditions, complexity of health care needs, or other measures of patient acuity of residents at such skilled nursing facilities and nursing facilities, and, if so, how such minimum staffing requirements shall be increased.

“(ii) Whether other minimum hours per resident day minimum staffing requirements should be established for other categories of direct care professionals or direct care workers in addition to the requirements established in sections 1819(b)(4)(C)(i)(II) and 1919(b)(4)(C)(i)(II).

“(iii) A review of staffing, safety, and quality data, as well as staffing requirement exception data, to assess the adequacy of existing staffing practices in such nursing facilities and skilled nursing facilities.

“(b) REPORTS.—

“(1) TO THE SECRETARY.—The designated entity shall submit to the Secretary a report on the results of the study conducted under subsection (a), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the designated entity determines appropriate.

“(2) TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after receiving each report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on—

“(A) the findings and recommendations included in such report; and

“(B) any plan to implement such recommendations, including a justification for any recommendations the Secretary determines should not be implemented.

“(c) REGULATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the Secretary submits an initial report under subsection (b)(2), the Secretary shall—

“(A) specify through regulations, consistent with such report, a minimum staffing requirement for nursing staff for skilled nursing facilities (as defined in section 1819(a)) and nursing facilities (as defined in section 1919(a)); and

“(B) require such skilled nursing facilities and such nursing facilities to comply with such staffing requirements, including by providing the minimum staffing sufficient to meet the needs of each resident in any such facility.

“(2) UPDATE.—Not later than 1 year after the Secretary submits each subsequent report under subsection (b)(2), the Secretary shall, consistent with each such report, update the regulations described in paragraph (1)(A) as necessary.

“(d) FUNDING.—The Secretary shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund under section 1817 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account, of \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2027 for purposes of carrying out this section. Amounts transferred pursuant to the previous sentence shall remain available until expended.”

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The moratorium imposed under section 7111 of the Act titled “An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14” (Public Law 119-21) (relating to implementation of certain staffing standards for long-term care facilities under the Medicare and Medicaid programs) shall not be construed to apply to the amendments made by this section.

SEC. 3. PERMANENT FUNDING FOR THE SURVEY AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR NURSING HOMES AND OTHER HEALTH CARE ENTITIES.

Part A of Title XI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1301 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1150C the following new section:

“SEC. 1150D. FUNDING FOR THE SURVEY AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.

“There is appropriated to the Secretary, out of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund under section 1817 and the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841 (in such proportions as the Secretary determines to be appropriate), \$800,000,000 for fiscal year 2027 and each subsequent fiscal year for the purpose of conducting the Secretary’s Survey and Certification Program, including under section 1864. Amounts appropriated under the preceding sentence shall remain available until expended.”

SEC. 4. INVESTING IN THE NURSING HOME WORKFORCE.

(a) MEDICARE.—Section 1819(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i-3(h)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(B)(ii)(IV)(ff), by inserting “, provided that not less than half of such amounts are provided to the State in which the facility is located for the purposes described in paragraph (7),” after “collected may”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(7) USE OF CIVIL MONEY PENALTY AMOUNTS TO SUPPORT THE SKILLED NURSING FACILITY WORKFORCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), a State shall use the amounts provided to such State pursuant to paragraph (2)(B)(ii)(IV)(ff) for the fiscal year in which such amounts are provided for the following purposes:

“(i) Providing grants to entities such as educational institutions, advocacy organizations for skilled nursing facility residents, senior citizens, or individuals with disabilities, and unions that represent the skilled nursing facility workforce to support projects that use community-driven approaches to recruit, educate, and train individuals to expand the skilled nursing facility workforce.

“(ii) The funding of projects that develop new career pathway programs for the skilled nursing facility workforce.

“(iii) The repayment of student loans for qualified skilled nursing facility providers (as defined in subparagraph (C)) or the payment of tuition for such providers who commit to serving in a skilled nursing facility or a nursing facility (as defined in section 1919(a)) for not less than 3 years within a 10-year period.

“(B) PROHIBITIONS ON USE OF FUNDS.—

“(i) PROHIBITION ON PROVIDING FUNDS TO ENTITIES RELATED TO FACILITIES.—A State may not provide any amounts provided to such State pursuant to paragraph (2)(B)(ii)(IV)(ff) to an entity that has a related party relationship with a nursing facility or skilled nursing facility in such State.

“(ii) PROHIBITION ON USING FUNDS FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS INCURRED IN COMPLETING NURSE AIDE TRAINING AND COMPETENCY EVALUATION PROGRAMS AND NURSE AIDE COMPETENCY EVALUATION PROGRAMS.—A State may not use any amounts provided to such State pursuant to paragraph (2)(B)(ii)(IV)(ff) to—

“(I) reimburse costs incurred in completing a nurse aide training and competency evaluation program or a nurse aide competency evaluation program under subsection (f)(2)(A); or

“(II) supplant the payment of such costs under such subsection.

“(C) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

“(i) QUALIFIED SKILLED NURSING FACILITY PROVIDER.—The term ‘qualified skilled nursing facility provider’ means—

“(I) a geriatrician or other physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or other practitioner who provides services in a skilled nursing facility or nursing facility; or

“(II) a registered professional nurse, a licensed practical nurse (or a licensed vocational nurse), or a certified nursing assistant who provides direct care services to residents in a skilled nursing facility or nursing facility, as determined by the Secretary.

“(ii) RELATED PARTY.—The term ‘related party’ means an entity that, to a significant extent is associated or affiliated with, or has control of, or is controlled by, a nursing facility or skilled nursing facility.

“(D) ANNUAL REPORTING.—

“(i) REPORT FROM STATES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph, and annually thereafter, each State that receives amounts pursuant to paragraph (2)(B)(ii)(IV)(ff) shall submit to the Secretary a report describing—

“(I) how amounts received in the previous fiscal year were allocated;

“(II) the mechanisms to ensure such amounts benefit the development of the skilled nursing facility workforce;

“(III) how such amounts will impact measurable outcomes for residents of skilled nursing facilities and nursing facilities, such as staff vacancy rates, turnover rates, median hourly wages, staffing hours per resident, and resident quality outcomes; and

“(IV) how such State is ensuring compliance with subparagraph (B).

“(ii) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the Secretary receives the annual reports from States under clause (i), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the information contained in such reports.”

(b) MEDICAID.—Section 1919(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r(h)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A)(ii)—

(A) in the second sentence, by striking “Funds collected” and inserting “Subject to the last sentence of this clause, funds collected”; and

(B) by inserting the following sentence at the end: “Not less than half of the funds collected pursuant to this clause shall be used for the purposes described in paragraph (10).”;

(2) in paragraph (3)(C)(ii)(IV)(ff), by inserting “, provided that not less than half of such amounts are provided to the State in which the facility is located for the purposes described in paragraph (10).”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(10) USE OF CIVIL MONEY PENALTY AMOUNTS TO SUPPORT THE NURSING FACILITY WORKFORCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), a State shall use not less than half of the funds collected under paragraph (2)(A)(ii) and the amounts provided to such State pursuant to paragraph (3)(C)(ii)(IV)(ff) (collectively referred to in this paragraph as ‘civil money penalty amounts’) for the fiscal year in which such amounts are collected or provided for the following activities:

“(i) Providing grants to entities such as educational institutions, advocacy organizations for nursing facility residents, senior citizens, or individuals with disabilities, and unions that represent the nursing facility workforce to support projects that use community-driven approaches to recruit, educate, and train individuals to expand the nursing facility workforce.

“(ii) The funding of projects that develop new career pathway programs for the nursing facility workforce.

“(iii) The repayment of student loans for qualified nursing facility providers (as defined in subparagraph (C)) or the payment of tuition for such providers who commit to serving in a skilled nursing facility (as defined in section 1819(a)) or a nursing facility for not less than 3 years within a 10-year period.

“(B) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—

“(i) PROHIBITION ON PROVIDING FUNDS TO ENTITIES RELATED TO FACILITIES.—A State may not provide any civil money penalty amounts to an entity that has a related party relationship with a nursing facility or skilled nursing facility in such State.

“(ii) PROHIBITION ON USING FUNDS FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS INCURRED IN COMPLETING

NURSE AIDE TRAINING AND COMPETENCY PROGRAMS AND NURSE AIDE COMPETENCY EVALUATION PROGRAMS.—A State may not use any civil money penalty amounts to—

“(I) reimburse costs incurred in completing a nurse aid training and competency evaluation program or a nurse aide competency evaluation program under subsection (f)(2)(A); or

“(II) supplant the payment of such costs under such subsection.

“(C) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

“(i) QUALIFIED NURSING FACILITY PROVIDER.—The term ‘qualified nursing facility provider’ means—

“(I) a geriatrician or other physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or other practitioner who provides services in a skilled nursing facility or nursing facility; or

“(II) a registered professional nurse, licensed practical nurse (or a licensed vocational nurse), or certified nursing assistant who provides direct care services to residents in a skilled nursing facility or nursing facility, as determined by the Secretary.

“(ii) RELATED PARTY.—The term ‘related party’ means an entity that, to a significant extent is associated or affiliated with, or has control of, or is controlled by, a nursing facility or skilled nursing facility.

“(D) ANNUAL REPORTING.—

“(i) REPORT FROM STATES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph, and annually thereafter, each State that receives any civil money penalty amounts shall submit to the Secretary a report describing—

“(I) how amounts received in the previous fiscal year were allocated;

“(II) the mechanisms to ensure such amounts benefit the development of the nursing facility workforce;

“(III) how such amounts will impact measurable outcomes for residents of skilled nursing facilities and nursing facilities, such as staff vacancy rates, turnover rates, median hourly wages, staffing hours per resident, and resident quality outcomes; and

“(IV) how such State is ensuring compliance with subparagraph (B).

“(ii) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the Secretary receives the annual reports from States under clause (i), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the information contained in such report.”.

SEC. 5. CODIFICATION OF REGULATIONS REGARDING REQUIREMENTS FOR LONG-TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS AND PAYMENT TRANSPARENCY REPORTING.

Sections 438.72 and 442.43 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on May 10, 2024), shall have the force and effect of law.

SA 4707. Mr. CORNYN proposed an amendment to the bill S. 4123, to prohibit preferential screening for Members of Congress at airports, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 2, strike lines 8 through 13, and insert the following:

(4) TRUSTED TRAVELER PROGRAM.—The term “Trusted Traveler Program” means any of the following:

(A) Global Entry.

(B) The PreCheck Program.

(C) SENTRI.

(D) NEXUS.

(E) Any other United States Government program that issues a unique identifier, such as a known traveler number, that the Transportation Security Administration accepts as validating that the individual holding such identifier is a member of a known low-risk population.

(F) Any other program implemented by the Transportation Security Administration under section 109(a)(3) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 114 note; Public Law 107-71).

On page 2, line 24, strike “may” and insert “shall”.

On page 3, line 1, strike “bypass standard” and insert “be exempt from Federal passenger and baggage”.

SA 4708. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. GALLEGRO, and Mr. KELLY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 4. RESPECT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Respect for Local Communities Act”.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.—The term “appropriate local government officials” means—

(A) the mayor, county executive, or equivalent elected official of the town, city, county or other local jurisdiction in which a new processing site or detention center will be located; and

(B) a majority of the town council, city council, county council, county commission, or equivalent legislative authority in which a new processing site or detention center will be located.

(2) NEW PROCESSING SITE OR DETENTION CENTER.—The term “new processing site or detention center” means any facility operated by, or pursuant to a contract with, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, including any facility designed under the Detention Reengineering Initiative, that, beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, will be used to temporarily hold persons pending the resolution or completion of immigration removal operations or processes.

(c) REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW ICE PROCESSING SITES AND DETENTION CENTERS.—The Department of Homeland Security or any other Federal agency may not initiate the construction, acquisition, renovation, or operation of, or otherwise acquire an interest in real property to be used as, a new processing site or detention center for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement until—

(1) the relevant Federal agency issues a public notice in the Federal Register that—

(A) is open for public comments for a period lasting at least 30 days;

(B) describes the scope of the construction, acquisition, renovation, or operation;

(C) includes information regarding such agency’s due diligence process, which shall explain how such agency will comply with—

(i) Federal guidance and standards related to immigration detention;

(ii) applicable environmental regulations;

(D) includes any other information or documentation relevant to such new processing site or detention center; and

(E) includes an economic impact analysis and an engineering review that addresses the site or center’s waste exportation, water usage, and electrical demand;

(2) after the conclusion of the public comment period, the head of the relevant Federal agency—

(A) considers and responds to significant comments received in accordance with subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code; and

(B) enters into a signed, written agreement with appropriate local government officials

and the Governor of the State in which such processing site or detention center will be located that authorizes such construction, acquisition, renovation, or operation, as applicable; and

(3) at least 30 days has elapsed since the head of the relevant Federal agency submitted a report to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives regarding such planned construction, acquisition, renovation, or operation that includes a fully executed copy of the agreement described in paragraph (2).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have five requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet in open and closed session during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

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 Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct an executive business meeting.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to my defense fellow and my intern for the remainder of the Congress. They are Alexis Todaro-Wiegner and Caroline Moffett.

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