

of education for which accelerated payments of educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill may be used, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 2417. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to designate the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace home in Hope, Arkansas, as a National Historic Site and unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. LOTT):

S. 2418. A bill to preserve local radio broadcast emergency and other services and to require the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a rulemaking for that purpose; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. STEVENS (for himself, Mr. HAGEL, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 2419. A bill to ensure the proper remembrance of Vietnam veterans and the Vietnam War by providing a deadline for the designation of a visitor center for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. VITTER):

S. 2420. A bill to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to provide for payments for producing coastal States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 2421. A bill to establish the Louisiana Hurricane and Flood Protection Council for the improvement of hurricane and flood protection in Louisiana; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself and Mr. LOTT):

S. 2422. A bill to establish a Conservation and Habitat Restoration Fund and to require the Secretary of Commerce to provide grants to States for coastal zone management, coastal wetlands conservation, coastal land protection, and fisheries habitat restoration, and to improve understanding of coastal areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SANTORUM:

S. 2423. A bill to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ALLEN:

S. 2424. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the contribution limits for health savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CONRAD (for himself and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. 2425. A bill to apply amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act related to providing medical services in underserved areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. REID:

S. Res. 402. A resolution designating the first day of April, 2006, as "National Asbestos Awareness Day"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 333

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 333, a bill to hold the current regime in Iran accountable for its threatening behavior and to support a transition to democracy in Iran.

S. 1035

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1035, a bill to authorize the presentation of commemorative medals on behalf of Congress to Native Americans who served as Code Talkers during foreign conflicts in which the United States was involved during the 20th century in recognition of the service of those Native Americans to the United States.

S. 1086

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) were added as cosponsors of S. 1086, a bill to improve the national program to register and monitor individuals who commit crimes against children or sex offenses.

S. 1120

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1120, a bill to reduce hunger in the United States by half by 2010, and for other purposes.

S. 1848

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1848, a bill to promote remediation of inactive and abandoned mines, and for other purposes.

S. 2178

At the request of Mr. BURNS, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2178, a bill to make the stealing and selling of telephone records a criminal offense.

S. 2197

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2197, a bill to improve the global competitiveness of the United States in science and energy technology, to strengthen basic research programs at the Department of Energy, and to provide support for mathematics and science education at all levels through the resources available through the Department of Energy, including at the National Laboratories.

S. 2198

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2198, a bill to ensure the United States successfully competes in the 21st century global economy.

S. 2199

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from California

(Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2199, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives to promote research and development, innovation, and continuing education.

S. 2232

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2232, a bill to require the Secretary of the Army to submit to Congress a report identifying activities for hurricane and flood protection in Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and for other purposes.

S. 2253

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2253, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to offer the 181 Area of the Gulf of Mexico for oil and gas leasing.

S. 2338

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2338, a bill to extend the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities to expedite the processing of permits.

S. 2370

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2370, a bill to promote the development of democratic institutions in areas under the administrative control of the Palestinian Authority, and for other purposes.

S. 2389

At the request of Mr. ALLEN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2389, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to prohibit the unlawful acquisition and use of confidential customer proprietary network information, and for other purposes.

S. 2390

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2390, a bill to provide a national innovation initiative.

S. 2400

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2400, a bill to transfer authority to review certain mergers, acquisitions, and takeovers of United States entities by foreign entities to a designee established within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

S. 2414

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S.

2414, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require broker reporting of customer's basis in securities transactions, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 359

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 359, a resolution concerning the Government of Romania's ban on intercountry adoptions and the welfare of orphaned or abandoned children in Romania.

S. RES. 398

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 398, a resolution relating to the censure of George W. Bush.

AMENDMENT NO. 3001

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3001 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3004

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3004 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3004 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, *supra*.

AMENDMENT NO. 3009

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3009 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3018

At the request of Mr. CHAMBLISS, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3018 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting

forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3030

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3030 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3031

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3031 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3035

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3035 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3043

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3043 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3045

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3045 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3048

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3048 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3050

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. TALENT) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3050 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3052

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3052 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3054

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) and the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3054 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3056

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3056 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3061

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3061 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3063

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Florida (Mr.

NELSON), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3063 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3065

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3065 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3067

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3067 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. 2415. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase burial benefits for veterans; and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Veterans Burial Benefits Improvement Act.

We must honor our U.S. soldiers who died in the name of their country. These service men and women are America's true heroes and on this day we pay tribute to their courage and sacrifice. Some have given their lives for our country. All have given their time and dedication to ensure our country remains the land of the free and the home of the brave. We owe a special debt of gratitude to each and every one of them.

Our Nation has a sacred commitment to honor the promises made to soldiers when they signed up to serve our country. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I fight hard each year to make sure promises made to our service men and women are prom-

ises kept. These promises include access to quality, affordable health care and a proper burial for our veterans.

I am deeply concerned that burial benefits for the families of our wounded or disabled veterans have not kept up with inflation and rising funeral costs. We are losing over 1,000 World War II veterans each day, but Congress has failed to increase veterans' burial benefits to keep up with rising costs and inflation. While these benefits were never intended to cover the full costs of burial, they now pay for only a fraction of what they covered in 1973, when the Federal Government first started paying burial benefits for our veterans.

I want to thank my colleagues on the Veterans Affairs Committee for working with me in the 107th Congress. Together, we were able to increase modestly the service-connected benefit from \$1,500 to \$2,000, and the plot allowance from \$150 to \$300. While I believe these increases are a step in the right direction, they are not a substitute for the amounts included in my bill.

That is why I am again introducing the Veterans Burial Benefits Improvement Act. This bill will increase burial benefits to cover the same percentage of funeral costs as they did in 1973. It will also provide for these benefits to be increased annually to keep up with inflation.

In 1973, the service-connected benefit paid for 72 percent of veterans' funeral costs. Today, this benefit covers just 39 percent of funeral costs. My bill will increase the service-connected benefit from \$2,000 to \$3,713, bringing it back up to the original 72 percent level.

In 1973, the non-service connected benefit paid for 22 percent of funeral costs. It has not been increased since 1978, and today it covers just 6 percent of funeral costs. My bill will increase the non-service connected benefit from \$300 to \$1,135, bringing it back up to the original 22 percent level.

In 1973, the plot allowance paid for 13 percent of veterans' funeral costs. Yet it now covers just 3 percent of funeral costs. My bill will increase the plot allowance from \$300 to \$670, bringing it back up to the original 13 percent level.

Finally, the Veterans Burial Benefits Improvement Act will also ensure that these burial benefits are adjusted for inflation annually, so veterans will not have to fight this fight again.

This legislation is just one way to honor our Nation's service men and women. I want to thank the millions of veterans, Marylanders, and people across the Nation for their patriotism, devotion, and commitment to honoring the true meaning of Memorial Day. U.S. soldiers from every generation have shared in the duty of defending America and protecting our freedom. For these sacrifices, America is eternally grateful.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of this legislation be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2415

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Burial Benefits Improvement Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN BURIAL AND FUNERAL BENEFITS FOR VETERANS.

(a) INCREASE IN BURIAL AND FUNERAL EXPENSES AND PROVISION FOR ANNUAL COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT.—

(1) EXPENSES GENERALLY.—Section 2302(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "\$300" and inserting "\$1,135 (as increased from time to time under section 2309 of this title)".

(2) EXPENSES FOR DEATHS IN DEPARTMENT FACILITIES.—Section 2303(a)(1)(A) of such title is amended by striking "\$300" and inserting "\$1,135 (as increased from time to time under section 2309 of this title)".

(3) EXPENSES FOR DEATHS FROM SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.—Section 2307 of such title is amended by striking "\$2,000," and inserting "\$3,712 (as increased from time to time under section 2309 of this title)".

(b) PLOT ALLOWANCE.—Section 2303(b) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking "\$300" the first place it appears and inserting "\$670 (as increased from time to time under section 2309 of this title)"; and

(2) by striking "\$300" the second place it appears and inserting "\$670 (as so increased)".

(c) ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 23 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 2309. Annual adjustment of amounts of burial benefits"

"With respect to any fiscal year, the Secretary shall provide a percentage increase (rounded to the nearest dollar) in the burial and funeral expenses under sections 2302(a), 2303(a), and 2307 of this title, and in the plot allowance under section 2303(b) of this title, equal to the percentage by which—

"(1) the Consumer Price Index (all items, United States city average) for the 12-month period ending on the June 30 preceding the beginning of the fiscal year for which the increase is made, exceeds

"(2) the Consumer Price Index for the 12-month period preceding the 12-month period described in paragraph (1)".

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"2309. Annual adjustment of amounts of burial benefits".

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to deaths occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) PROHIBITION ON COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007.—No adjustments shall be made under section 2309 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (c), for fiscal year 2007.

By Mr. BURNS (for himself and Mr. PRYOR):

S. 2416. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the scope of programs of education for which accelerated payments of educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill may be used, and for