

(Mr. LEVIN) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 3494, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to qualify formerly homeless individuals who are full-time students for purposes of low income housing tax credit.

S. 3522

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3522, a bill to provide for the expansion of affordable refinancing of mortgages held by the Federal National Mortgage Association and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation.

S. 3525

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3525, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

S. 3546

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3546, a bill to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to reauthorize a provision to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages.

S. 3551

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3551, a bill to require investigations into and a report on the September 11–13, 2012, attacks on the United States missions in Libya, Egypt, and Yemen, and for other purposes.

S. 3560

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 3560, a bill to provide for scientific frameworks with respect to recalcitrant cancers.

S. 3565

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3565, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 3567

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3567, a bill to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Women's History Museum, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 41

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, her name was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 41, a joint resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the nuclear program of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

S. CON. RES. 50

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 50, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding actions to preserve and advance the multistakeholder governance model under which the Internet has thrived.

S. RES. 453

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 453, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that supporting seniors and individuals with disabilities is an important responsibility of the United States, and that a comprehensive approach to expanding and supporting a strong home care workforce and making long-term services and supports affordable and accessible in communities is necessary to uphold the right of seniors and individuals with disabilities in the United States to a dignified quality of life.

S. RES. 543

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 543, a resolution to express the sense of the Senate on international parental child abduction.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED:

S. 3582. A bill to improve quality and accountability for educator preparation programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, we know that public education lays the foundation for economic growth and the ongoing vitality of our democracy.

We also know that there is more work to be done to improve our schools. To achieve this goal, we need to focus on the professionals who have the greatest impact on student learning at school—teachers and principals.

Last year, I introduced the Effective Teaching and Leading Act to support teachers, librarians, and principals currently on the job through a comprehensive system of induction, professional development, and evaluation.

Today, I am pleased to be introducing the Educator Preparation Reform Act with Representative HONDA to improve how we prepare teachers, principals, and other educators so that

they can be effective right from the start.

Our legislation builds on the success of the Teacher Quality Partnership Program, which I helped author. We have added a specific focus on principals with the addition of a residency program for new principals.

Improving instruction is a team effort, with principals at the helm. This bill better connects teacher preparation with principal preparation. The Educator Preparation Reform Act will also allow partnerships to develop preparation programs for other areas of instructional need, such as for school librarians, counselors, or other academic support professionals.

The bill revamps the accountability and reporting requirements for teacher preparation programs to provide greater transparency on key quality measures such as admissions standards, requirements for clinical practice, placement of graduates, retention in the field of teaching, and teacher performance, including student learning outcomes.

All programs, whether traditional or alternative routes to certification, will report on the same measures.

Under this legislation, states will be required to identify at-risk and low performing programs and provide them with technical assistance and a timeline for improvement. Programs that are at-risk or low performing will be restricted in their ability to offer TEACH grants. States would be encouraged to close programs that do not improve.

The Educator Preparation Reform Act refocuses the state set-aside for higher education in Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act on activities to support the development and implementation of performance assessments to measure new teachers' readiness for the classroom and for technical assistance for struggling teacher preparation programs.

We have been fortunate to work with many stakeholders in developing the key provisions of this legislation. Organizations that have endorsed the Educator Preparation Reform Act include: the Alliance for Excellent Education, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Council on Education, American Psychological Association, Association of American Universities, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, First Focus Campaign for Children, Higher Education Consortium for Special Education, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Directors of Special Education,

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Science Teachers Association, National School Boards Association Opportunity to Learn Action Fund, Public Education Network, Rural School and Community Trust, Silicon Valley Education Foundation, Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, The Higher Education Task Force, National Association of Elementary School Principals, and National Association of Secondary School Principals.

I look forward to working with these organizations, my colleagues, and others as I seek to include this legislation during the effort next Congress to reauthorize both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Higher Education Act. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

By Mrs. HAGAN (for herself, Mr. KERRY, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 3583. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to establish and carry out a community revitalization program to provide Federal grants to communities for the rehabilitation of critically needed parks, recreational areas, and facilities, the development of improved recreational programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I rise today to highlight the impact that local parks, greenways, and recreational opportunities have in neighborhoods and communities across the country.

Many Americans are dealing with the effects of a stagnant economy, the rising cost of health care, and threats to the overall quality of life in their communities. Research shows that investment in parks and recreation creates jobs, attracts business, increases property values, positively impacts public health, promotes conservation in a non-regulatory fashion, and contributes to a higher quality of life for hard-working Americans and their families. Additionally, recreation for disabled veterans has proven to be a powerful tool in the rehabilitation process, providing a number of significant therapeutic benefits for those who have served our country. Yet, many of our most populated areas are suffering from limited green space, deteriorating community facilities, and a lack of access to safe, quality recreation opportunities.

I have seen first-hand the tremendous impact that parks, greenways, and recreation opportunities have had in my hometown of Greensboro, a three time winner of the National Recreation and Park Association's Gold Medal Award. North Carolina's beautiful capital city, Raleigh, which is often referred to as "a city within a park", has been recognized over the last several years by publications such as *Forbes*, *Business Week*, and the *Wall Street*

Journal as the best city for business, best city for jobs, and the nation's best place to live. All of these accolades are due in large part to the high quality of the parks and recreational facilities present throughout the community and were often noted when describing the criteria for making these "best of" selections.

For all of these reasons, today I am introducing the Community Parks Revitalization Act with Senator KERRY and Senator GILLIBRAND. The bill will authorize the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide grants and technical assistance to rehabilitate community parks and recreational infrastructure. This legislation would also help communities provide improved opportunities for returning veterans, military families, and at-risk youth. Specifically, the Community Parks for Revitalization Act would provide matching grants to support localities by creating jobs and leveraging private investment by supporting capital projects that rehabilitate, and construct new, parks and recreation areas and facilities.

The act will combat childhood obesity by connecting youth with the outdoors and improving overall public health by increasing access to recreational areas and facilities; by providing innovative, cost-effective, and non-regulatory solutions to environmental challenges; and by addressing the recreation needs of disabled veterans, military families, as well as disadvantaged youth.

I ask all of my colleagues to please join me in supporting this timely legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the *RECORD*.

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

S. 3583

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 "Community Parks Revitalization Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) According to the 2010 United States Census, over 80 percent of the population of the United States lives in urban areas.

(2) Urban parks are a critical part of our Nation's urban infrastructure, playing a vital role in revitalizing neighborhoods, stimulating our Nation's economy, combating national issues such as obesity and juvenile delinquency, and protecting our environment.

(3) Urban parks are a catalyst for active outdoor recreation, an industry which in 2010 supported 6,100,000 American jobs, generated \$646,000,000,000 in retail sales and services across the United States, generated \$39,900,000,000 in Federal tax revenues, and \$39,900,000,000 in State and local tax revenues.

(4) Studies also show that approximately 20 jobs are created for every \$1,000,000 invested in parks and conservation projects.

(5) Studies have found that parkland saves cities millions of dollars in storm water

management and air pollution expenses by capturing precipitation, reducing runoff, and absorbing air pollutants.

(6) Between 2001 and 2012, as funding for local parks and recreation significantly declined, the number of adults classified as overweight or obese steadily increased from 61 percent to 67 percent. Similarly, during this same period, the number of children and adolescents classified as overweight or obese nearly tripled, going from 12 percent in 2001 to 33 percent in 2011.

(7) Physical inactivity contributes to obesity and takes a toll on our Nation's economy, as the annual costs of medical spending and lost productivity from individuals in the United States being obese and overweight are estimated to be \$147,000,000,000. Access to urban parks is critical to combating this issue. A study by the Centers for Disease Control found that the creation of, or enhanced access to, places for physical activity, such as parks, led to a 25.6 percent increase in the percentage of people exercising on 3 or more days a week which improves the physical and mental health of our citizens.

(8) Access to urban parks is critical to combating obesity and its residual impact on health care expenses. A study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that the creation of, or enhanced access to, places for physical activity, such as parks, led to a 25.6 percent increase in the percentage of people exercising on 3 or more days a week, which improves the physical and mental health of our citizens.

(9) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, over the 25 years preceding the date of enactment of this Act, rates of obesity have more than tripled among adolescents ages 12 to 19 and doubled among adults ages 20 to 74 and children ages 6 to 11.

(10) Physical inactivity contributes to obesity. A study by the CDC found that the creation of, or enhanced access to, places for physical activity led to a 25.6 percent increase in the percentage of people exercising on 3 or more days a week. Physical activity can improve physical and mental health. The annual costs of medical spending and lost productivity from individuals in the United States being obese and overweight are estimated to be \$147,000,000,000.

(11) Urban parks also decrease juvenile delinquency by providing quality after school programs. According to the Juvenile Justice Bulletin, without structured, supervised activities in the after school hours, youth are at greater risk of being victims of crime or participating in anti-social behaviors, especially during the hours of 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

(12) The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center reported that students who spend no time in extracurricular activities, such as those offered in after-school programs through parks and recreation agencies, are 49 percent more likely to have used drugs and 37 percent more likely to become teen parents than are those students who spend 1 to 4 hours per week in extracurricular activities.

(13) According to the Juvenile Justice Bulletin, without structured, supervised activities in the after-school hours, youth are at greater risk of being victims of crime or participating in anti-social behaviors. Juveniles are at the highest risk of being a victim of crime between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., and the peak hour for juvenile crime is between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., the first hour after most students are dismissed from school.

SEC. 3. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to authorize the Secretary to establish and carry out a community revitalization program to provide Federal grants to communities for the rehabilitation of critically

needed parks, recreational areas, and facilities, the development of improved recreational programs, and for other purposes;

(2) to improve urban areas through economic development;

(3) to prevent and improve chronic disease outcomes, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, and obesity;

(4) to improve recreational areas and facilities and expand recreation services in urban areas with a high incidence of crime and to help expand recreation opportunities for at-risk youth;

(5) to promote collaboration between local agencies involved in parks and recreation, law enforcement, youth social services, and juvenile justice system;

(6) to ensure accessibility to therapeutic recreation services and to provide recreation opportunities for injured or disabled members of the Armed Forces; and

(7) to encourage the rehabilitation of existing and construction of new urban recreational areas and facilities with environmentally beneficial components, when possible, such as sustainable landscape features and upcycled and recycled materials, and to prioritize the selection of projects that provide environmental benefits to urban areas, including by updating lighting, planting trees, increasing the urban forestry canopy, improving stormwater management, increasing green infrastructure, employing water conservation measures, and adding green spaces to urban areas.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) The term “recreational areas and facilities” means indoor or outdoor parks, buildings, sites, or other facilities that are dedicated to recreation purposes and administered by public or private nonprofit agencies to serve the recreation needs of community residents, with emphasis on public facilities readily accessible to residential neighborhoods, including multiple-use community centers that have recreation as a primary purpose, but excluding major sports arenas, exhibition areas, and conference halls used primarily for commercial sports, spectator, or display activities.

(2) The term “rehabilitation and construction grants” means matching capital grants to local governments for the purpose of rebuilding, remodeling, expanding, or developing existing or building new recreational areas and facilities, including improvements in park landscapes, infrastructure, buildings, and support facilities, and the provision of lighting, emergency phones, or other capital improvements to improve the security of urban parks, but excluding routine maintenance and upkeep activities.

(3) The term “innovation and recreation program” grants means matching grants to local governments to cover costs of personnel, facilities, equipment, supplies, or services designed to demonstrate innovative and cost effective ways to augment park and recreation opportunities, or support new or existing programs, which increase access to recreation opportunities for returning veterans and active duty military and their families or provide constructive alternatives for youth at risk for engaging in criminal behavior.

(4) The term “recovery action program grants” means matching grants to local governments for development of local park and recreation recovery action programs, including for resource and needs assessment, coordination, citizen involvement and planning, and program development activities to encourage public definition of goals and develop priorities and strategies for overall recreation system recovery.

(5) The term “maintenance” means all commonly accepted practices necessary to keep recreational areas and facilities operating in a state of good repair and to protect such areas and facilities from deterioration resulting from normal wear and tear.

(6) The term “local government” means any city, county, town, township, parish, village, or any local or regional special district such as a park district, conservation district, or park authority.

(7) The term “private nonprofit agency” means a community-based, non-profit organization, corporation, or association organized for purposes of providing recreation, conservation, and educational services directly to urban residents on either a neighborhood or community-wide basis through voluntary donations, voluntary labor, or public or private grants.

(8) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

(9) The term “State” means any State of the United States (or any instrumentality of a State approved by the Governor), the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

(10) The term “insular areas” means Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

SEC. 5. FEDERAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS.

(a) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate regulations establishing a community revitalization program to provide Federal rehabilitation and construction grants, innovation and recreation programming grants, and recovery action program grants in accordance with this Act.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) eligibility requirements for the grant program established pursuant to such subsection;

(2) the timing and form of applications required to be submitted to the Secretary by local governments seeking such grants;

(3) required elements of any grant application required to be submitted to the Secretary by local governments seeking such grants;

(4) criteria for priority selection and approval by the Secretary in choosing which local governments receive grant funds;

(5) guidelines for seeking modification of a project to be funded or which is funded by the grant program established pursuant to such subsection; and

(6) penalties placed on local governments that received amounts under the grant program established pursuant to such subsection for failing to comply with the reporting and recordkeeping requirements set forth in section 13, up to and including rescission of grant amounts for repetitive violations.

SEC. 6. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND PRIORITY CRITERIA.

(a) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In developing the regulations required under section 5(a), the Secretary shall set forth eligibility requirements for receiving grants under the community revitalization program established pursuant to this Act.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The eligibility requirements required to be established under paragraph (1) shall be based on—

(A) evidence of a commitment to ongoing planning, rehabilitation, service, operation, and maintenance programs for park and recreations systems, as described in section 8;

(B) population density (the number of persons per square mile of land area);

(C) total population under 18 years of age or over 59 years of age;

(D) the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the civilian labor force;

(E) the percent of households without automobiles available;

(F) the percent of persons with income below 125 percent of the poverty level;

(G) the percent of single-headed households with children present; and

(H) any additional criteria the Secretary determines appropriate.

(b) PARTIAL ELIGIBILITY WAIVER.—

(1) GENERALLY.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary is authorized to designate local governments in standard metropolitan statistical areas, as defined by the most current census, that do not meet all of the eligibility requirements required under subsection (a) as eligible to receive grants under this Act.

(2) LIMITATION OF FUNDS.—Grants to local governments described in paragraph (1) shall not exceed, in the aggregate, 15 percent of the funds appropriated pursuant to this Act for rehabilitation and construction, innovation and recreation program, and recovery action program grants.

(c) ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION.—As part of any application process set forth pursuant to the regulations prescribed under section 5, a responsible official for a local government that has applied for a grant under this Act shall certify that the local government meets all of the eligibility requirements established under this Act with respect to receipt of grant amounts under the community revitalization program established pursuant to this Act. If a local government applies for a partial eligibility waiver under subsection (b), such certification shall specify which of the eligibility requirements are met by the local government.

(d) PRIORITY CRITERIA.—

(1) GENERAL PRIORITY CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall establish priority criteria for the selection and approval of projects to be funded by grant amounts made available pursuant to this Act. The priority criteria established under this subsection shall be based on factors such as—

(A) a higher population density of the project neighborhood;

(B) demonstrated deficiencies in the condition of existing recreational areas and facilities in the project neighborhood;

(C) demonstrated deficiencies in access to neighborhood recreation opportunities, particularly for minority and low- and moderate-income residents, veterans or active duty military families, and residents with physical or mental disabilities;

(D) the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the civilian labor force of the project neighborhood;

(E) public participation in determining rehabilitation or development needs;

(F) the extent to which a project or program supports or complements target activities undertaken as part of a local government's overall community development and urban revitalization program;

(G) the extent to which such a project would—

(i) provide employment opportunities for minorities, youth, and low- and moderate-income residents in the project neighborhood; and

(ii) provide for participation of neighborhood, nonprofit, or tenant organizations in the proposed rehabilitation and construction activity or in subsequent maintenance, staffing, or supervision of recreational areas and facilities;

(H) the amount of State, local, and private support for the project as evidenced by commitments of non-Federal resources to project construction or operation; and

(I) any additional criteria the Secretary determines appropriate.

(2) PRIORITY CRITERIA FOR REHABILITATION AND CONSTRUCTION GRANTS.—In addition to

the general priority criteria established under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall establish priority criteria for the selection and approval of projects to be funded by a rehabilitation and construction grant made pursuant to this Act, including whether the project—

(A) builds recreational areas and facilities in areas that are located within half a mile of public housing or a school and do not currently have indoor or outdoor facilities;

(B) creates, maintains, or revitalizes playgrounds or active play areas for children;

(C) connects children to the outdoors for physical activity and access to nature;

(D) promotes physical activity for individuals and the community at large;

(E) works collaboratively with local governments, colleges, and universities, and other institutions to track the longitudinal rates of chronic diseases in the community such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, and obesity;

(F) uses environmentally beneficial components such as sustainable landscape features and upcycled and recycled materials;

(G) provides environmental benefits to urban areas, including by—

(i) updating lighting;

(ii) planting trees;

(iii) increasing the urban forestry canopy;

(iv) improving stormwater management;

(v) increasing green infrastructure;

(vi) employing water conservation measures; or

(vii) adding green spaces;

(H) connects to public transportation;

(I) uses LEED Green Building Standards or contains energy efficiency components such as energy efficient lighting and HVAC systems, and uses SITES sustainable landscape standards, or other sustainable components and practices;

(J) contains safe trails or routes, such as trails, bikeways, and sidewalks that connect to neighborhoods and enhance access to parks and recreational areas and facilities;

(K) enhances or expands youth development in neighborhoods and communities by engaging youth in environmental stewardship, conservation, and service projects;

(L) updates existing equipment or facilities to be in compliance with the most recent accessibility guidelines published by the United States Access Board, specifically by removing architectural barriers so that sites comply or exceed the requirements of the final guidelines for the accessibility of recreational areas and facilities; or

(M) constructs new facilities or sites to comply with or exceed the minimum requirements of the final guidelines for the accessibility of recreational sites and facilities published by the United States Access Board.

(3) **PRIORITY CRITERIA FOR INNOVATION AND RECREATION PROGRAM GRANTS.**—In addition to the general priority criteria established under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall establish priority criteria for the selection and approval of programs to be funded by an innovation and recreation program grant made pursuant to this Act, including whether the project or program—

(A) promotes the unique integration of recreation with other community services, such as transportation, public housing and public safety, either to expand or update current services, or to link programs within the social service structure of a neighborhood or between neighborhoods;

(B) utilizes new management and cost-saving or service-efficient approaches for improving the delivery of recreation services;

(C) serves communities with a high population of active military families or veterans;

(D) ensures accessibility to therapeutic recreation services and provides recreation

opportunities for injured or disabled members of the Armed Forces;

(E) employs veterans, youth, or uses youth volunteers;

(F) targets youth are at the greatest risk of becoming involved in violence and crime;

(G) demonstrates past success in providing constructive alternatives to youth at risk for engaging in criminal behavior;

(H) demonstrates collaboration between local park and recreation, juvenile justice, law enforcement, and youth social service agencies and nongovernmental entities, including private, nonprofit agencies; and

(I) shows the greatest potential of being continued with non-Federal funds or may serve as models for other communities.

SEC. 7. REHABILITATION AND INNOVATION AND RECREATION PROGRAM GRANTS.

(a) **AUTHORIZATION.**—Upon approval of an application by the chief executive of an eligible local government, the Secretary may provide 70 percent matching rehabilitation and construction grants and innovation and recreation program grants directly to such eligible local government.

(b) **TRANSFER.**—At the discretion of a local government receiving a rehabilitation and construction grant or innovation and recreation program grant pursuant to subsection (a), and if consistent with an approved application, such a grant may be transferred in whole or in part to private nonprofit agencies, provided that assisted recreational areas and facilities owned or managed by such private nonprofit agencies offer recreation opportunities to the general population within the jurisdictional boundaries of the local government.

(c) **PAYMENTS.**—Grant payments may be made only for rehabilitation and construction or innovation and recreation projects and programs approved by the Secretary. In the case of rehabilitation and construction and innovation projects, such payments may be made periodically in keeping with the rate of progress toward the satisfactory completion of a project, except that the Secretary may, when appropriate, make advance payments on approved rehabilitation and construction and innovation projects in an amount not to exceed 20 percent of the total project cost.

(d) **MODIFICATION OF PROJECT.**—The Secretary may authorize modification of an approved rehabilitation and construction or innovation project only when a grantee has adequately demonstrated that such modification is necessary because of circumstances not foreseeable at the time such project was proposed.

(e) **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR INNOVATION AND RECREATION PROGRAM.**—Innovation grants shall correspond to the goals, priorities, and implementation strategies expressed in local park and recreation recovery action programs, with particular regard to the special considerations listed in section 8(b) of this Act.

SEC. 8. LOCAL COMMITMENTS TO SYSTEM RECOVERY AND MAINTENANCE.

(a) **RECOVERY ACTION PROGRAMS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—As a requirement for project approval, a local government applying for a grant under this Act shall submit to the Secretary evidence of its commitment to ongoing planning, rehabilitation, service, operation, and maintenance programs for its park and recreation systems. Such commitment shall be expressed in a local park and recreation recovery action program that maximizes coordination of all community resources, including other federally supported urban development and recreation programs.

(2) **INTERIM PRELIMINARY ACTION PROGRAMS.**—During an initial interim period to be established by regulation, the recovery

action program requirement under paragraph (1) may be satisfied by submission of preliminary action programs of a local government that define objectives, priorities, and implementation strategies for overall system recovery and maintenance and commit such local government to a scheduled program development process.

(3) **5-YEAR ACTION PROGRAM.**—Following the interim period under paragraph (2), each local government applicant shall submit to the Secretary, as a condition of eligibility, a 5-year park and recreation recovery action program that demonstrates—

(A) identification of recovery objectives, priorities, and implementation strategies;

(B) adequate planning for rehabilitation of specific recreational areas and facilities, including projections of the cost of proposed projects;

(C) capacity and commitment to assure that facilities provided or improved under this Act shall thereafter continue to be adequately maintained, protected, staffed, and supervised;

(D) intention to maintain total local public outlays for park and recreation purposes at levels at least equal to those in the year preceding that in which grant assistance is sought, except in any case where a reduction in park and recreation outlays is proportionate to a reduction in overall spending by the applicant; and

(E) the relationship of the park and recreation recovery action program to overall community development and urban revitalization efforts.

(4) **CONTINUING PLANNING PROCESS.**—Where appropriate, the Secretary may encourage local governments to meet recovery action program requirements through a continuing planning process which includes periodic improvements and updates in recovery action program submissions to eliminate identified gaps in program information and policy development.

(b) **RECOVERY ACTION PROGRAM SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS.**—Recovery action programs shall address, at a minimum, the following special considerations:

(1) **Rehabilitation of existing recreational areas and facilities, including—**

(A) general systemwide renovation;

(B) special rehabilitation requirements for recreational areas and facilities in areas of high population concentration and economic distress; and

(C) restoration of outstanding or unique structures, landscaping, or similar features in parks of historical or architectural significance.

(2) **Local commitments to innovative and cost-effective programs and projects at the neighborhood level to augment recovery of park and recreation systems, including—**

(A) recycling of abandoned schools and other public buildings for recreation purposes;

(B) multiple use of operating educational and other public buildings;

(C) purchase of recreation services on a contractual basis;

(D) use of mobile facilities and recreational, cultural, and educational programs or other innovative approaches to improving access for neighborhood residents;

(E) integration of the recovery action program with federally assisted projects to maximize recreation opportunities through conversion of abandoned railroad and highway rights-of-way, waterfront, and other redevelopment efforts and such other federally assisted projects, as appropriate;

(F) conversion to recreational use of street space, derelict land, and other public lands not now designated for neighborhood recreational use; and

(G) use of various forms of compensated and uncompensated land regulation, tax inducements, or other means to encourage the private sector to provide neighborhood park and recreation facilities and programs.

(C) PUBLICATION OF REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall establish and publish in the Federal Register requirements for preparation, submission, and updating of local park and recreation recovery action programs.

(D) INNOVATION AND RECREATION PROGRAM GRANT.—

(1) ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligible to receive an at-risk youth recreation grant, a local government shall—

(A) include in its 5-year park and recreation recovery action program the goal of—

(i) utilizing new ideas, concepts, and approaches aimed at improving facility design, operations, or programming in the delivery of recreation services;

(ii) increased access of therapeutic or other recreation services to veterans and military families; or

(iii) reducing crime and juvenile delinquency; and

(B) provide a description of implementation strategies to achieve such goals.

(2) COORDINATION.—The description of implementation strategies under paragraph (1) shall also address how the local government is coordinating its recreation programs with other community development or service agencies.

(E) RECOVERY ACTION PROGRAM GRANTS.—The Secretary is authorized to provide up to 50 percent matching grants to eligible local government applicants for recovery action program development and planning to meet the objectives of this section.

SEC. 9. STATE ACTION INCENTIVE; FEDERAL GRANTS, INCREASE.

The Secretary is authorized to increase Federal rehabilitation and construction grants and innovation and recreation program grants authorized under section 7, by providing an additional match equal to the total match provided by a State of up to 15 percent of the total project or program costs. In no event may the Federal matching amount exceed 85 percent of total project or program cost. The Secretary shall further encourage the States to assist in assuring that local recovery plans and programs are adequately implemented by cooperating with the Department of Housing and Urban Development in monitoring local park and recreation recovery action programs and in assuring consistency of such plans and programs, where appropriate, with State recreation policies as set forth in statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plans.

SEC. 10. MATCHING REQUIREMENTS; NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT OR PROGRAM COSTS.

(A) NON-FEDERAL SOURCES.—The non-Federal share of project or program costs assisted under this Act may be derived from—

(1) general or special purpose State or local revenues;

(2) State categorical grants;

(3) special appropriations by State legislatures;

(4) donations of land, buildings, or building materials;

(5) in-kind construction, technical, and planning services; or

(6) any combination of paragraphs (1) through (5).

(B) PROHIBITED SOURCES.—No moneys from any Federal grant program other than general revenue sharing and the community development and energy efficiency and conservation block grant programs shall be used to match Federal grants under this program.

(C) PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS.—The Secretary shall encourage States and private interests to contribute, to the maximum ex-

tent possible, to the non-Federal share of project or program costs.

SEC. 11. CONVERSION OF RECREATION PROPERTY.

No property improved or developed with assistance under this Act shall, without the approval of the Secretary, be converted for uses other than for public recreation. The Secretary shall approve such conversion only if the Secretary determines it to be consistent with the current local park and recreation recovery action program and only upon such conditions as the Secretary determines necessary to assure the provision of adequate recreation properties and opportunities of reasonably equivalent location and usefulness.

SEC. 12. COORDINATION OF PROGRAM.

The Secretary shall—

(1) coordinate the urban revitalization and livable communities program with other Federal departments and agencies and with State agencies that administer programs and policies affecting urban areas such as the White House Office of Urban Policy and departments that administer programs and policies affecting climate change, green jobs, housing, urban development, natural resources management, employment, transportation, community services, and voluntary action;

(2) encourage maximum coordination of the program between appropriate State agencies and local government applicants; and

(3) require that local government applicants include provisions for participation of community and neighborhood residents, including youth, and for public-private coordination in recovery action program planning and project selection.

SEC. 13. REPORT; RECORDKEEPING; AUDIT AND EXAMINATION.

(A) REPORT.—Each recipient of assistance under this Act shall submit to the Secretary, for each fiscal year such assistance is received, an annual report detailing the projects and programs undertaken with such assistance, the number of jobs created by such assistance, and any other information the Secretary determines appropriate based on the priority criteria established by the Secretary under sections 5 and 6.

(B) RECORDKEEPING.—Each recipient of assistance under this Act shall keep such records as the Secretary shall prescribe, including records that fully disclose the amount and disposition of project or program undertakings in connection with which assistance under this Act is given or used, and the amount and nature of that portion of the cost of the project or program undertaking supplied by other sources, and such other records as will facilitate an effective audit.

(C) AUDIT AND EXAMINATION.—The Secretary and the Comptroller General of the United States, or their duly authorized representatives, shall have access, for the purpose of audit and examination, to any books, documents, papers, and records of a recipient of assistance under this Act that are pertinent to such assistance.

SEC. 14. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(A) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as necessary to carry out this Act for each of fiscal years 2013 through 2022.

(B) RECOVERY ACTION PROGRAM GRANTS.—Not more than 3 percent of the funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) in any fiscal year may be used for grants for the development of local park and recreation recovery action programs pursuant to section 8 of this Act.

(C) INNOVATION AND RECREATION PROGRAM GRANTS.—Not more than 10 percent of the

funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) in any fiscal year may be used for innovation grants pursuant to section 7 of this Act.

(D) DISCRETIONARY FUND.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act or any other law or regulation, not more than 2 percent of the funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) in any fiscal year may be used to provide rehabilitation and construction grants, innovation and recreation program grants, and recovery action program grants to be used in the insular areas. Such sums will not be subject to the matching provisions of this Act, and may only be subject to such conditions, reports, plans, and agreements, if any, as determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 15. LIMITATION OF USE OF FUNDS.

Not more than 10 percent of funds appropriated pursuant to section 14 for rehabilitation and construction grants in any fiscal year may be used for the acquisition of lands or interests in land.

SEC. 16. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(A) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress an interim report containing such findings and recommendations as the Secretary determines appropriate with respect to the community revitalization program established pursuant to this Act.

(B) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the overall impact of the community revitalization program established pursuant to this Act.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 3587. A bill to include the Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands in the California Coastal National Monument as a part of the National Landscape Conservation System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce the California Coastal National Monument Expansion Act. Congressman MIKE THOMPSON recently introduced companion legislation to this bill in the House of Representatives, and I thank him for all of the work he has done on advancing this initiative. I would also like to thank Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN for joining me as an original co-sponsor of this legislation.

The California Coastal National Monument, created by President Clinton in 2000, stretches over 1,100 miles off California's coast and protects more than 20,000 small islands, rocks, exposed reefs, and islands between Mexico and Oregon. My bill would incorporate 1,225 acres of the Stornetta Public Lands and other public lands near the city of Point Arena in Mendocino County into the existing National Monument, creating the Monument's first onshore additions. By expanding the National Monument to include the "Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands," my bill not only preserves the area for future generations, but also helps create a more cohesive bridge between the offshore resources and onshore public lands. Visitors will have contiguous public access to the current National Monument, the proposed expansion

area, the adjacent Manchester Beach State Park, and the historic Point Arena Lighthouse.

It is crucial that steps be taken to ensure the permanent preservation of this naturally diverse segment of the California Coast, which encompasses over two miles of coastline with natural bridges, tide pools, waterfalls, sinkholes and blowholes, and portions of the Garcia River and surrounding estuary. The area is not only recognized for its breathtaking coastal formations, but also for outstanding natural resources that include extensive wetlands, rumped sand dunes, and rolling meadows. Adding these lands to the National Monument will provide additional resources for more effective management and conservation program opportunities.

The "Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands" is also home to a diverse ecosystem. The Garcia River is crucial habitat for Coho and Chinook salmon habitat, as well as a prime birding location for multiple bird species including the Laysan Albatross, Peregrine Falcon, Great Blue Heron, and many others. These lands are also the targets of restoration efforts that would help protect local endangered wildlife such as the Point Arena Mountain Beaver, Behren's Silverspot Butterfly, and other species of concern, like the Black Oyster Catcher.

In Mendocino County, tourism is responsible for supporting almost 5,000 jobs, with visitors bringing in \$19 million annually in state and local taxes. Visitors come from all over the world to experience the beauty and natural wonders of California's northern coast, and local businesses and nearby towns will benefit from the increased profile of a National Monument designation. A National Monument designation will bring increased awareness to the recreational opportunities available in the area, including hiking, fishing, bird watching, nature photography and wildlife watching. This designation could also attract increased resources to support the needs of the area.

It is no wonder that the "Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands" are often referred to as the most significant parts of the Mendocino coastline. These magnificent lands have tremendous natural and recreational value, and it is imperative for them to be included as part of the California Coastal National Monument. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this important legislation. The "Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands" deserves National Monument recognition, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this effort.

By Mr. REED:

S. 3589. A bill to require the Comptroller of the Currency to establish a pilot program to facilitate communication between borrowers and servicers; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Mortgage Modification Outreach Act.

Despite some promising indicators in the housing market, many homeowners continue to face the threat of foreclosure. In my home state of Rhode Island, 22.6 percent of mortgages are underwater and 7.65 percent of homeowners are either in the foreclosure process or at least 90 days delinquent on their payment, a level which is higher than the national average.

I have heard from many of my constituents about the difficulties they experience when applying for loan modifications, and so the bill I am introducing focuses on providing homeowners with a face and a place where they can get more help.

First, the bill establishes a pilot program that would allow homeowners to receive information on how to reach their single point of contact by simply visiting a consumer banking branch affiliated with their mortgage servicer. Second, at the same affiliated bank branch, the homeowner can receive the address of a nearby location at which the homeowner can, at no cost in some cases, copy, fax, scan, or send all the paperwork that is required during the loan modification process. Simply put, my bill would enable a borrower to walk into the local bank branch affiliated with their mortgage servicer and get some face to face help.

This pilot program is designed to bridge the gap that has arisen as struggling homeowners have sought—unsuccessfully in too many instances—to get easy answers to basic questions from their mortgage servicer as they navigate the loan modification process. Homeowners looking for assistance should neither have to jump through countless hoops nor be given the run-around. They should be treated like customers.

There is no single solution that will help us gain traction in the housing market. However, along with my other efforts, such as S. 489, the Preserving Homes and Communities Act, S. 2162, the Project Rebuild Act, and my efforts to convert vacant foreclosed homes into rental properties, this legislation represents another commonsense approach to helping homeowners stay in their homes, reducing foreclosures, and healing the housing market.

This bill is supported by the National Consumer Law Center and the National Association of Realtors. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 3602. A bill to repeal the nutrition entitlement programs and establish a food stamp block grant program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I rise to introduce a new bill, the Food Stamp Restoration Act. This is a bill that will completely revamp the Food Stamp program, which is something that is

desperately needed. Since the beginning of the Obama administration, the number of Americans on Food Stamps has increased by 46 percent. Over 46 million Americans currently claim Food Stamp benefits, and this costs taxpayers over \$80 billion per year. In 2008, just four years ago, the program cost \$40 billion per year—it has more than doubled in cost under President Obama's leadership.

How on earth did we get here?

Many changes to the program that have ballooned its cost have been made in recent years. President Obama, in his stimulus package, pushed reforms that both made it easier to qualify for the program and increased the value of the program's benefits. When the stimulus bill passed, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that the changes made to the Food Stamp program would increase the cost of it by to nearly \$60 billion over 10 years.

Worse yet, the President has pursued economic, tax, and regulatory policies that are anti-business. These policies have made the business environment uncertain, which makes it nearly impossible for firms to invest in and expand their businesses. Businesses are doing well to simply hold on to what they already have. This has kept both unemployment and food stamp enrollment higher than it should be.

Since the stimulus package, there have been a few efforts to tinker with the structure and value of the Food Stamp program, but none of them have amounted to much. The Senate-passed Farm Bill reduced the cost of the program by a paltry \$4 billion over 10 years, which is less than 1 percent of its total 10-year cost. That was one of the main reasons I voted against the Farm Bill.

But we have moved well beyond tinkering around the edges. If we do not do anything to dramatically reform the food stamp program, it will cost Federal taxpayers nearly \$800 billion over the next decade. This program needs to change.

That is why I am introducing the Food Stamp Restoration Act.

Today, the Food Stamp program is a mandatory program, meaning that Congress does not have to appropriate money every year for the Food Stamp program to be funded. Rather, it is funded automatically. This dramatically reduces Congressional accountability over the program, leaving few opportunities to make adjustments and improvements to the program. This needs to change.

My bill tackles this problem head on. The Food Stamp Restoration Act converts the program from a mandatory program into a discretionary one. If my bill is enacted, Congress will have to decide each year how much money to spend on the Food Stamp program.

My bill also removes the power of designing and running the program from the Federal Government and gives it to the states. The new Food Stamp program will be a block grant, which

means that States will be given nearly limitless flexibility to design and implement their food stamp programs in the way that best serves their people.

This makes sense to me. I have never thought that bureaucrats in Washington understood Oklahomans. But the people in Oklahoma City do. If my bill is enacted, each State will receive an allotment from the Food Stamp appropriation that will be proportional to the number of individuals living in the State with an income at or below the Federal poverty level. Benefits will be given to the people who need them most.

States will only have to meet a few requirements to qualify for the block grant. First, their program will not be allowed to authorize benefit spending on things like alcohol and tobacco. The program should only allow benefit spending on real food. Second, all beneficiaries must submit themselves to drug testing. Finally, States must implement work requirements for the beneficiaries. This follows the general welfare reform efforts that I have been championing since first coming to the Senate.

To give States flexibility during times of economic weakness, they will be able to keep their allotment of funds for up to 5 years. This will allow States to provide benefits to more people during times of higher unemployment. After 5 years, if States have unused funds, the money will return to the Treasury for deficit reduction or debt repayment.

All told, my bill will save over \$300 billion for Federal taxpayers, and it make significant improvements to the current program by giving States complete control over the design and implementation of the programs within their States.

The Obama administration has dramatically increased the cost of this welfare program, making millions more Americans reliant on federal assistance than necessary. The cost has doubled in just four short years. I urge the Senate to consider my bill soon so that we can save taxpayers \$300 billion over 10 years while reducing the dependency of the population on government programs.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 3602

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 “Food Stamp Restoration Act of 2012”.

SEC. 2. FOOD STAMP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2021, the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this Act as the “Secretary”) shall establish a food stamp block grant program under which the Secretary shall make annual grants to each participating State that establishes a food stamp

program in the State and submits to the Secretary annual reports under subsection (d).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—As a requirement of receiving grants under this section, the Governor of each participating State shall certify that the State food stamp program includes—

- (1) work requirements;
- (2) mandatory drug testing;
- (3) verification of citizenship or proof of lawful permanent residency of the United States; and
- (4) limitations on the eligible uses of benefits that are at least as restrictive as the limitations in place for the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) as of May 31, 2012.

(c) AMOUNT OF GRANT.—For each fiscal year, the Secretary shall make a grant to each participating State in an amount equal to the product of—

- (1) the amount made available under section 3 for the applicable fiscal year; and
- (2) the proportion that—

(A) the number of legal residents in the State whose income does not exceed 100 percent of the poverty line (as defined in section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2), including any revision required by such section)) applicable to a family of the size involved; bears to

(B) the number of such individuals in all participating States for the applicable fiscal year, based on data for the most recent fiscal year for which data is available.

(d) ANNUAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 1 of each year, each State that receives a grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary a report that shall include, for the year covered by the report—

(A) a description of the structure and design of the food stamp program of the State, including the manner in which residents of the State qualify for the program;

(B) the cost the State incurs to administer the program;

(C) whether the State has established a rainy day fund for the food stamp program of the State; and

(D) general statistics about participation in the food stamp program.

(2) AUDIT.—Each year, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(A) conduct an audit on the effectiveness of the nutritional assistance block grant program and the manner in which each participating State is implementing the program; and

(B) not later than June 30, submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report describing—

- (i) the results of the audit; and
- (ii) the manner in which the State will carry out the food stamp program in the State, including eligibility and fraud prevention requirements.

(e) USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives a grant under this section may use the grant in any manner determined to be appropriate by the State to provide food stamps to the legal residents of the State.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Grant funds made available to a State under this section shall—

(A) remain available to the State for a period of 5 years; and

(B) after that period, shall—

(i) revert to the Federal Government to be deposited in the Treasury and used for Federal budget deficit reduction; or

(ii) if there is no Federal budget deficit, be used to reduce the Federal debt in such manner as the Secretary of the Treasury considers appropriate.

SEC. 3. FUNDING.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act—

- (1) for fiscal year 2014, \$40,000,000,000;
- (2) for fiscal year 2015, \$40,700,000,000;
- (3) for fiscal year 2016, \$41,600,000,000;
- (4) for fiscal year 2017, \$42,400,000,000;
- (5) for fiscal year 2018, \$43,200,000,000;
- (6) for fiscal year 2019, \$44,100,000,000;
- (7) for fiscal year 2020, \$45,000,000,000; and
- (8) for fiscal year 2021, \$45,900,000,000.

(b) DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMIT ADJUSTMENT.—Section 251(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(c)) is amended—

- (1) in paragraph (3), by striking the figure and inserting “\$1,106,000,000,000”;
- (2) in paragraph (4), by striking the figure and inserting “\$1,126,700,000,000”;
- (3) in paragraph (5), by striking the figure and inserting “\$1,148,600,000,000”;
- (4) in paragraph (6), by striking the figure and inserting “\$1,173,400,000,000”;
- (5) in paragraph (7), by striking the figure and inserting “\$1,199,200,000,000”;
- (6) in paragraph (8), by striking the figure and inserting “\$1,226,100,000,000”;
- (7) in paragraph (9), by striking the figure and inserting “\$1,253,000,000,000”; and
- (8) in paragraph (10), by striking the figure and inserting “\$1,279,900,000,000”.

(c) DISCRETIONARY CAP ADJUSTMENT FOR NEW PROGRAM SPENDING.—Section 251A(2) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a(2)) is amended—

- (1) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking the figure and inserting “\$550,000,000,000”;
- (2) in subparagraph (C)(ii), by striking the figure and inserting “\$560,700,000,000”;
- (3) in subparagraph (D)(ii), by striking the figure and inserting “\$571,600,000,000”;
- (4) in subparagraph (E)(ii), by striking the figure and inserting “\$583,400,000,000”;
- (5) in subparagraph (F)(ii), by striking the figure and inserting “\$596,200,000,000”;
- (6) in subparagraph (G)(ii), by striking the figure and inserting “\$610,100,000,000”;
- (7) in subparagraph (H)(ii), by striking the figure and inserting “\$623,000,000,000”; and
- (8) in subparagraph (I)(ii), by striking the figure and inserting “\$635,900,000,000”.

SEC. 4. REPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Effective September 30, 2013, the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) is repealed.

(b) REPEAL OF MANDATORY FUNDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, effective September 30, 2013, the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) (as in effect prior to that date) shall cease to be a program funded through direct spending (as defined in section 250(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900(c)) prior to the amendment made by paragraph (2)).

(2) DIRECT SPENDING.—Effective September 30, 2013, section 250(c)(8) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900(c)(8)) is amended—

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

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

(C) by striking subparagraph (C).

(3) ENTITLEMENT AUTHORITY.—Effective September 30, 2013, section 3(9) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 622(9)) is amended—

(A) by striking “means—” and all that follows through “the authority to make” and inserting “means the authority to make”; and

(B) by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(C) by striking subparagraph (B).

(4) OTHER DIRECT SPENDING.—Effective September 30, 2013, section 1026(5) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 691e(5)) is amended—

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

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

(C) by striking subparagraph (C).

(c) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAW.—Any reference in this Act, an amendment made by this Act, or any other Act to the supplemental nutrition assistance program shall be considered to be a reference to the food stamp block grant program under this Act.

SEC. 5. BASELINE.

Notwithstanding section 257 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 907), the baseline shall assume that, on and after September 30, 2013, no benefits shall be provided under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) (as in effect prior to that date).

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 571—CONGRATULATING THE NUNAKA VALLEY LITTLE LEAGUE JUNIOR GIRLS SOFTBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE 2012 LITTLE LEAGUE JUNIOR SOFTBALL WORLD SERIES

Mr. BEGICH (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 571

Whereas the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior girls softball team is comprised of young women who play softball in Anchorage, Alaska;

Whereas the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior softball team compiled an extraordinary record of 7 wins and 1 loss on their way to winning the State tournament;

Whereas the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior softball team went undefeated in 4 games in winning the West Regional Tournament in Tucson, Arizona;

Whereas in August, 2012, the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior softball team represented the West Region at the Little League Junior Softball World Series in Kirkland, Washington;

Whereas Nunaka Valley Little League Junior softball team manager Richard Hill led the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior softball team to the Little League Junior Softball World Series for a third time in 4 years;

Whereas on August 18, 2012, the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior softball team defeated Victoria, British Columbia to win the 2012 Little League Junior Softball World Series;

Whereas the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior softball team won 5 games and lost just 1 en route to becoming 2012 Little League Junior Softball World Series champions;

Whereas over 2,000 teams and 30,000 players compete in Little League Junior girls softball;

Whereas the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior girls softball team is the Little League Junior Softball World Series champions;

Whereas the teamwork and commitment of the entire Nunaka Valley Little League Jun-

ior girls softball team and the encouragement of their families has again led them to success;

Whereas Little League softball and baseball has provided a positive athletic experience and fostered teamwork and sportsmanship for millions of children in the United States and around the world; and

Whereas, Alaskans everywhere are proud of the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior girls athletes: Jacynne Augafa, Leilani Blair, Morgan Hill, Ashton Jesse, Alexis Joubert, Felila Manu, Taria Page, Hannah Peterson, Teighlor Rardon, Sierra Rosenzweig, Lauren Syrup, and Nanea Tali on their accomplishments in 2012: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates all of the Nunaka Valley Little League Junior girls softball team, parents, and coaching staff on a championship season; and

(2) respectfully requests the Secretary of the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) the Nunaka Valley Little League president, Greg Davis; and

(B) the Nunaka Valley Junior Girls manager, Richard Hill; and

(C) coaches Rick Peterson and Sean Syrup.

SENATE RESOLUTION 572—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2012 AS THE “NATIONAL MONTH OF VOTER REGISTRATION”

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. TESTER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 572

Whereas the United States has overcome the stains of historic State-sponsored voting discrimination, including State laws that imposed voting qualifications such as property ownership, religious qualifications, grandfather clauses, poll taxes, and literacy tests and were designed to exclude racial minorities, poorer voters, and certain religious groups from voting;

Whereas courts have struck down these State laws because the laws conflict with the Constitution of the United States;

Whereas Congress has continuously moved to expand the franchise of voting;

Whereas the 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 23rd, 24th, and 26th amendments to the Constitution of the United States are intended to protect minorities, poorer voters, women, the elderly, and youth from voting discrimination;

Whereas, in 1965, Congress enacted the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973 et seq.) to remedy past discrimination in voting and protect vulnerable citizens from practices that infringe on the right to vote or elect a candidate of their choice;

Whereas, in 1993, Congress enacted the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.) to establish protections around the voting process, increase the number of citizens who register to vote, and encourage governments to protect the integrity of the electoral process;

Whereas, in 2002, in response to the controversy surrounding the 2000 presidential election, Congress enacted the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 15301 et seq.), which provided new standards for voting systems, created the independent Election Assistance Commission to assist with the administration of Federal elections, and established minimum standards for States and local governments that administer Federal elections;

Whereas Congress has reauthorized the Voting Rights Act of 1965 5 times, most recently in 2006, recognizing the need for continued enforcement against State practices in voting that discriminate against or disenfranchise vulnerable citizens;

Whereas, since 2010, some States have enacted voting laws that are reminiscent of historic State-sponsored voting discrimination;

Whereas some States have already disenfranchised some young people, elderly people, and former Members of Congress through strict new voting laws;

Whereas some States continue to disenfranchise United States citizens with past criminal convictions who live and work in our communities;

Whereas Members of Congress and notable civil rights organizations have studied recently-enacted State voting laws and calculated that the laws will have a grave impact on millions of minority, elderly, young, and poor individuals who are eligible to vote and will seek to register to vote and vote on election day;

Whereas, since March 12, 2012, 2 State courts in Wisconsin have held that the Wisconsin voter identification law enacted in 2011 violates the Wisconsin constitution, with one court writing that “a government that undermines the very foundation of its existence—the people’s inherent, pre-constitutional right to vote—imperils its legitimacy as a government by the people, for the people, and especially of the people”;

Whereas Federal courts in both Florida and Washington, DC, recently struck down new Florida state laws that restrict new voter registration and early voting hours, with one court writing that the new restrictions on voter registration drives “impose burdensome record-keeping and reporting requirements that serve little if any purpose, thus rendering them unconstitutional even to the extent they do not violate the [National Voter Registration Act of 1993]”, and another court holding, “[W]e conclude that we cannot . . . preclude Florida’s early voting changes because the State has failed to satisfy its burden of proving that those changes will not have a retrogressive effect on minority voters. Specifically, the State has not proven that the changes will be nonretrogressive if the covered counties offer only the minimum number of early voting hours that they are required to offer under the new statute, which would constitute only half the hours required under the prior law.”;

Whereas a Federal court in Washington, DC, recently struck down a Texas voter identification law, writing that the law “imposes strict, unforgiving burdens on the poor” and that “a disproportionately high percentage of African Americans and Hispanics in Texas live in poverty”;

Whereas a Federal court in Ohio recently struck down a State law that mandated that even in cases where poll workers steer voters to the wrong polling place, provisional votes cast in the wrong precinct must be discarded;

Whereas State representatives and political leaders in States such as New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Florida have made public admissions about how certain laws in their States were designed to put a dent in the democratic process;

Whereas, without a response from Congress, millions of voters in the United States may be subjected to State actions that will harm the franchise;

Whereas the month of September 2012 would be an appropriate month to commemorate a national focus on the importance of every citizen being registered and empowered to vote;