

under the Federal Lands to Parks Program. The county in turn leases this land to the center for \$1 per year, with a contract that runs through the year 2027.

The center is in need of repairs and maintenance, including a new roof; however, it has had difficulty in securing private financing for these activities because of the complex land ownership structure—Federal land conveyed conditionally to a county and leased to a private company. Due to Virginia's status as a Dillon Rule State, Rockingham County cannot execute a loan either.

This bill would specify that the 1989 land conveyance is transferred in fee simple, with no further use restrictions. I appreciate the goal of the Federal Lands to Parks Program to preserve land as open space, particularly after having overseen the preservation of 400,000 acres of open space in Virginia during my time as Governor of the Commonwealth. There are no plans to develop the open space on this site, only to fix the daycare center building—a former Forest Service garage that has been on the site since before its transfer from Federal ownership.

My Virginia colleague, Congressman Bob Goodlatte, has introduced companion legislation in the House of Representatives. During the 114th Congress, this bill was passed unanimously through the full House as a standalone; reported favorably without opposition by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee; and adopted by unanimous consent to be included in the Senate's bipartisan Energy bill. Unfortunately, it fell just short of final passage.

This is a small modification that simply removes unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles and allows the daycare center to continue doing what it has been doing for 25 years. I am pleased to partner with Congressman GOODLATTE in this commonsense, bipartisan effort.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 332. A bill to restrict funding for the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. COTTON. 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. 332

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

SECTION 1. RESTRICTION ON FUNDING FOR THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY ORGANIZATION.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—Congress declares that United Nations Security Council Resolution 2310 (September 23, 2016) does not obligate the United States or impose an obligation on the United States to refrain from actions that would run counter to the object

and purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

(b) RESTRICTION ON FUNDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No United States funds may be made available to the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

(2) EXCEPTION.—The restriction under paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to the availability of United States funds for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's International Monitoring System.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 53—AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. MCCAIN submitted the following resolution; from the Committee on Armed Services; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 53

Resolved,

SECTION 1. GENERAL AUTHORITY.

In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Armed Services (in this resolution referred to as the "committee") is authorized from March 1, 2017, through February 28, 2019, in its discretion, to—

(1) make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, use on a reimbursable or nonreimbursable basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

SEC. 2. EXPENSES.

(a) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, under this resolution shall not exceed \$3,783,845, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$46,667 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$17,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(b) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018, under this resolution shall not exceed \$6,486,591, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$80,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$30,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for

the period October 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019, under this resolution shall not exceed \$2,702,746, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$33,334 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$12,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 3. REPORTING LEGISLATION.

The committee shall report its findings, together with such recommendations for legislation as it deems advisable, to the Senate at the earliest practicable date, but not later than February 28, 2019.

SEC. 4. EXPENSES AND AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.

(a) EXPENSES OF THE COMMITTEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), expenses of the committee under this resolution shall be paid from the contingent fund of the Senate upon vouchers approved by the chairman of the committee.

(2) VOUCHERS NOT REQUIRED.—Vouchers shall not be required for—

(A) the disbursement of salaries of employees paid at an annual rate;

(B) the payment of telecommunications provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(C) the payment of stationery supplies purchased through the Keeper of the Stationery;

(D) payments to the Postmaster of the Senate;

(E) the payment of metered charges on copying equipment provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(F) the payment of Senate Recording and Photographic Services; or

(G) the payment of franked and mass mail costs by the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper.

(b) AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.—There are authorized to be paid from the appropriations account for "Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations" of the Senate such sums as may be necessary for agency contributions related to the compensation of employees of the committee—

(1) for the period March 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017;

(2) for the period October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018; and

(3) for the period October 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019.

SENATE RESOLUTION 54—EXPRESSING THE UNWAVERING COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. RUBIO, and Mrs. MCCASKILL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 54

Whereas, following World War II, the United States rejected isolationism, established its role as a world leader, and developed an international alliance system that protected the United States while supporting democracy, freedom, and economic prosperity with European nations;

Whereas, 70 years ago, the United States announced the Marshall Plan for Europe, a strategic investment in Europe, as well as articulated the Truman Doctrine, which sought to contain a growing Soviet threat in Southern Europe;

Whereas, in 1949, the United States, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland,

Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom signed the North Atlantic Treaty that formed the basis of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (in this preamble referred to as “NATO”);

Whereas NATO was created to protect countries from a growing Soviet threat, promote international peace and stability, and defend freedom;

Whereas, to date, 28 countries have joined NATO;

Whereas, for more than 67 years, NATO has served as a central pillar of United States national security and a deterrent against adversaries and external threats;

Whereas NATO continues to improve its collective defense measures, enhance its military capabilities to address a full spectrum of complex threats, and partner with non-NATO countries to promote international stability;

Whereas Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty is an integral part of NATO and states that “[t]he Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all . . .”;

Whereas NATO invoked Article 5 for the first time less than 24 hours after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the United States;

Whereas, in Afghanistan, NATO allies and partners have served alongside United States forces since 2001, reaching a peak of more than 42,000 ally and partner forces, 6,300 NATO forces continue to serve today alongside the 6,900 United States forces there, and more than 1,100 NATO ally and partner forces have paid the ultimate price in service to the collective defense of NATO;

Whereas NATO took the lead in helping combat the terrorist threat in Afghanistan through the International Security Assistance Force and Operation Resolute Support, contributing to the safety of the United States and the international community;

Whereas all 28 NATO allies and many NATO partners are contributing to the Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant;

Whereas approximately 18,000 military personnel are currently engaged in NATO missions around the world, conducting operations in Afghanistan, Kosovo, the Mediterranean, and off the Horn of Africa;

Whereas NATO conducts a range of maritime security operations in the Mediterranean and is essential to establishing stability along the borders of Europe and to responding to the ongoing refugee and migrant crisis;

Whereas, for nearly 10 years, NATO has provided airlift support for the mission of the African Union in Somalia, as well as assisted with training the African Standby Force at the request of the African Union;

Whereas, for more than 17 years, NATO has led peace-support operations in Kosovo to maintain safety and security in a volatile region;

Whereas NATO has three standing forces on active duty at all times to defend the Alliance, air policing capability, maritime forces, and an integrated air defense system;

Whereas NATO allies and the international community continue to look to NATO to deter the increasingly revanchist activities of Russia;

Whereas Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford, testified before the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate on July 19, 2015, that Russia presents the “greatest existential threat” to the United States;

Whereas the malign actions of Russia—its 2008 incursion into Georgia, its illegal annexation of Crimea, its continued military ac-

tion in Ukraine, its targeting of civilians in Syria, its ongoing information war in Europe, its continued violations of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Agreement, and its cyberattacks aimed at influencing United States elections—have violated international laws and norms;

Whereas Russia continues to use disinformation campaigns and promote state propaganda to discredit democracy and undermine NATO members;

Whereas, since the illegal annexation of Crimea and direct support to the conflict in Eastern Ukraine by Russia in 2014, NATO members have undertaken the biggest reinforcement of the collective defense of NATO since the end of the Cold War, enhancing allied readiness and deterrence measures in response to Russian aggression;

Whereas the efforts of NATO to confront and deter Russian aggression in Eastern Europe have included a three-fold increase in the size of the NATO Response Force (NRF) to 40,000 troops; the creation of a Spearhead Force of 5,000 troops capable of deploying within a few days to respond to any threat against an ally, particularly on the eastern flank of NATO; the forward deployment of up to 4,000 troops to Poland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; an increase in the air policing and maritime missions of NATO in Eastern Europe; and a significant increase in NATO training and military exercises in Eastern Europe;

Whereas, following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in 2014, the United States established Operation Atlantic Resolve and the European Reassurance Initiative to reassure NATO allies that the United States would uphold its global security commitments and work in coordination with European partners to deter Russian aggression;

Whereas, since 2014, Operation Atlantic Resolve and the European Reassurance Initiative have demonstrated the continued commitment of the United States to its NATO allies and partners by engaging in deterrence and security measures against potential Russian aggression in the region;

Whereas the United States is further strengthening its force presence in Europe through the continuous deployment of an armored brigade combat team to Poland on a rotating basis;

Whereas, on January 6, 2017, as a part of Operation Atlantic Resolve, 3,500 United States troops from the 4th Infantry Division in Fort Carson, Colorado, along with more than 2,500 military vehicles, were deployed to Eastern Europe to deter regional aggression;

Whereas continued United States leadership in NATO is critical to ensuring that NATO remains the greatest military alliance in history;

Whereas all NATO members have recommitted themselves to sharing the security burden of NATO at the 2014 NATO Wales Summit by pledging to meet the defense spending target for NATO members of 2 percent of gross domestic product within 10 years;

Whereas the United States, Greece, Poland, Estonia, and the United Kingdom all have exceeded that defense spending target;

Whereas, since the Wales Summit, Latvia, Lithuania, and many other allies have increased defense spending in an effort to meet that defense spending target;

Whereas NATO remains committed to its open door policy on enlargement, working with countries in the Euro-Atlantic region that aspire to join NATO to help meet the requirements for membership;

Whereas, at the 2016 NATO Warsaw Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government formally invited Montenegro to become the 29th member of NATO;

Whereas General James Jones, United States Marine Corps (retired), former National Security Advisor, testified before the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate in July 2016 that “[o]ur 27 NATO allies offer America forward basing, which allows us to better fight enemies like ISIS and deter adversaries like the new Russia and to meet shared challenges. Twenty-eight countries acting as one is a powerful alliance”;

Whereas Secretary of Defense James Mattis testified before the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, during his hearing as nominee for Secretary of Defense, that “[w]e must also embrace our international alliances and security partnerships. History is clear: Nations with strong allies thrive and those without them wither”;

Whereas there is a long tradition of strong bipartisan agreement that participation in NATO strengthens the security of the United States;

Whereas NATO is the first peacetime military alliance the United States entered into outside the Western Hemisphere and today remains the largest peacetime military alliance in the world;

Whereas a fractured NATO alliance would harm the interests of the United States and embolden adversaries of the United States; and

Whereas a strong and united Europe is important to United States strategic interests: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) pledges that the United States will continue to maintain strong leadership and strengthen its commitments to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (in this resolution referred to as “NATO”);

(2) strongly encourages NATO members to fulfill their pledge to invest at least 2 percent of gross domestic product on defense spending, invest at least 20 percent of such spending on major equipment (including research and development), and shoulder appropriate responsibility within NATO;

(3) recognizes the historic contribution and sacrifice NATO member countries have made while combating terrorism in Afghanistan through the International Security Assistance Force and Operation Resolute Support; and

(4) honors the men and women who served under NATO and gave their lives to promote peace, security, and international cooperation since 1949.

SENATE RESOLUTION 55—RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 26, 2017, AS THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE IN THE STATE OF ALASKA

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

S. RES. 55

Whereas Alaska Natives have lived on the land surrounding the Denali area and used the resources of the land for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, handicrafts, and trade for thousands of years;

Whereas Judge James Wickersham, of Fairbanks, Alaska, discovered gold in the Kantishna Hills following his attempted ascent of Denali in 1903, prompting a gold rush with several thousand prospectors and the establishment of successful placer and commercial mining operations that lasted for decades;

Whereas explorer Belmore Browne and hunter-naturalist Charles Sheldon visited