

Whereas there are 229 federally recognized tribes in Alaska and 20 Alaska Native languages are spoken in the State;

Whereas, on December 18, 1971, the landmark Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) was signed into law, which established 13 Alaska Native Regional Corporations and more than 200 Alaska Native Village Corporations;

Whereas more than 44,000,000 acres of land in Alaska are under Alaska Native ownership;

Whereas the 3 most diverse census tracts in the United States are located in the Municipality of Anchorage;

Whereas, during World War II, the Imperial Japanese Navy invaded and occupied portions of the Aleutian Islands of Alaska;

Whereas Alaska has—

(1) 12 major military bases and stations that are home to honorable men and women who serve the United States in the Armed Forces; and

(2) the highest number of veterans in the United States per capita;

Whereas some of the highest producing oil and natural gas fields in the United States are on the North Slope in Alaska;

Whereas more crude oil has been produced from State lands on the North Slope in Alaska than from Federal lands in the Central Gulf of Mexico;

Whereas the ports of Alaska consistently process the highest volume of commercial seafood that lands in the United States;

Whereas Alaska has vast reserves of minerals and the Red Dog Mine is one of the largest zinc mines in the world;

Whereas Alaska has produced world record-breaking agricultural products, such as the heaviest cabbage at 138.25 pounds and the heaviest broccoli at 35 pounds;

Whereas the Aurora Borealis is visible from Fairbanks an average of 243 days each year;

Whereas Girdwood was recognized by National Geographic as the world's best ski town;

Whereas, in the northernmost town in Alaska, the sun does not set for approximately 80 days in the summer and does not rise for approximately 60 days in the heart of winter;

Whereas President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the proclamation admitting Alaska to the United States on January 3, 1959; and

Whereas Alaska is the largest State in the United States in land area at more than 586,000 square miles and constitutes almost $\frac{1}{5}$ the size of the contiguous United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate commends the State of Alaska on, and joins with the people of the State of Alaska in celebrating, the 150th anniversary of the Alaska Purchase.

SENATE RESOLUTION 112—DESIGNATING APRIL 5, 2017, AS “GOLD STAR WIVES DAY”

Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 112

Whereas the Senate honors the sacrifices made by the spouses and families of the fallen members of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. represents the spouses and families of the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who have died on active duty or as a result of a service-connected disability;

Whereas the primary mission of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. is to provide services,

support, and friendship to the spouses of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas in 1945, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. was organized with the help of Eleanor Roosevelt to assist the families left behind by the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas the first meeting of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. was held on April 5, 1945;

Whereas April 5, 2017, marks the 72nd anniversary of the first meeting of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.;

Whereas the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States bear the burden of protecting the freedom of the people of the United States; and

Whereas the sacrifices of the families of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States should never be forgotten: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 5, 2017, as “Gold Star Wives Day”;

(2) honors and recognizes—

(A) the contributions of the members of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.; and

(B) the dedication of the members of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. to the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe Gold Star Wives Day to promote awareness of—

(A) the contributions and dedication of the members of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. to the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(B) the important role that Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. plays in the lives of the spouses and families of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 113—RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CENTER ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND DISABILITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 113

Whereas the Center on Human Development and Disability (referred to in this preamble as “CHDD”) is one of the largest and most comprehensive interdisciplinary centers in the United States that focuses on improving the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities;

Whereas, each year, hundreds of University of Washington faculty, staff, and students contribute to the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families by providing—

(1) model clinical services;

(2) basic and translational research;

(3) interdisciplinary clinical and research training; and

(4) technical assistance and outreach to community practitioners and agencies;

Whereas CHDD is a recognized University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, a national network authorized under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15001 et seq.);

Whereas, as a member of the network of 67 University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities located in every State

and territory, CHDD provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in 11 different CHDD-based clinics at the University of Washington;

Whereas CHDD scientists and clinicians conduct research to generate knowledge and disseminate information to improve the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities through the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center;

Whereas CHDD dynamically prepares graduate students and community professionals in health, education, behavioral, and other related fields to develop greater knowledge and skills to meet the unique needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families;

Whereas CHDD partners with premier national and State disability organizations and resources, such as the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council and Disability Rights Washington, to improve the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families; and

Whereas CHDD promotes the quality of life of individuals with developmental disabilities by improving—

(1) community access, support, and inclusion in education, housing options, continuing education opportunities, employment, quality health care, and wellness programs; and

(2) opportunities to build and grow friendships: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and celebrates the history and contributions of the Center on Human Development and Disability at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington; and

(2) commends the Center on Human Development and Disability for—

(A) creating more welcoming and supportive communities; and

(B) improving the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 12—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THOSE WHO SERVED IN THE BAYS, HARBORS, AND TERRITORIAL SEAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD BEGINNING ON JANUARY 9, 1962, AND ENDING ON MAY 7, 1975, SHOULD BE PRESUMED TO HAVE SERVED IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM FOR ALL PURPOSES UNDER THE AGENT ORANGE ACT OF 1991

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. DAINES) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

S. CON. RES. 12

Whereas section 1116(f) of title 38, United States Code, states that “For the purposes of establishing service connection for a disability or death resulting from exposure to a herbicide agent, including a presumption of service-connection under this section, a veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, served in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, shall be presumed to have been exposed during such service to an herbicide agent containing dioxin or 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid, and may be presumed to have been exposed during such service to any other chemical compound in an herbicide agent, unless there is

affirmative evidence to establish that the veteran was not exposed to any such agent during that service.”;

Whereas the international definition and United States-recognized borders of the Republic of Vietnam includes the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of that Republic;

Whereas multiple scientific and medical sources, including studies done by the Government of Australia, have shown evidence of exposure to herbicide agents such as Agent Orange by those serving in the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam;

Whereas veterans who served in the Armed Forces in the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, were exposed to this toxin through their ships' distillation processes, air and water currents, and the use of exposed water from inland sources, such as water from near heavily sprayed Monkey Mountain, delivered by exposed water barges;

Whereas such veterans experience a significantly higher percentage of medical conditions associated with Agent Orange exposure compared to those in the regular populace;

Whereas when passing the Agent Orange Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-4), Congress did not differentiate between those who served on the inland waterways and on land versus those who served in the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of that Republic;

Whereas the purpose behind providing presumptive coverage for medical conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange is because proving such exposure decades after its occurrence is not scientifically or medically possible; and

Whereas thousands of veterans who served in the Armed Forces in the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, die at increasing rates every year: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the intent of the Agent Orange Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-4) included the presumption that those veterans who served in the Armed Forces in the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, served in the Republic of Vietnam for all purposes under the Agent Orange Act of 1991;

(2) intends for those veterans who served in the Armed Forces during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, in the bays, harbors, territorial seas, inland waterways, on the ground in the Republic of Vietnam, and other areas exposed to Agent Orange, and having been diagnosed with connected medical conditions to be equally recognized for such exposure through equitable benefits and coverage as those who served in the inland rivers and on the Vietnamese land mass; and

(3) calls on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to review the policy of the Department of Veterans Affairs that excludes presumptive coverage for exposure to Agent Orange to veterans described in paragraph (1).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I have 9 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Sen-

ate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, at 9:30 a.m., in open session, to receive testimony on United States Strategic Command Programs.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at 10 a.m. to vote on the nomination of Mr. Jay Clayton.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate in order to hold a hearing on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, at 10 a.m. in Room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at 10:15 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled “The European Union as a Partner Against Russian Aggression: Sanctions, Security, Democratic Institutions, and the Way Forward.”

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, to conduct a hearing entitled “FDA User Fee Agreements: Improving Medical Product Regulation and Innovation for Patients, Part II” on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, at 9:30 a.m. in order to conduct a hearing titled “Fencing Along the Southwest Border.”

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the 115th Congress of the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, April 4, 2017 from 2:15 p.m. in room SH-219 of the Senate Hart Office Building.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY

The Subcommittee on Cybersecurity of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, at 2:30 p.m.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND MERCHANT MARINE INFRASTRUCTURE, SAFETY AND SECURITY

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 4,

2017, at 2:30 p.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The Committee will hold Subcommittee Hearing on “Keeping Goods a Moving: Continuing to Enhance Multimodal Freight Policy and Infrastructure.”

NATIONAL READ ALOUD MONTH

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 94.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 94) designating March 2017 as “National Read Aloud Month.”

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 94) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.
(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 23, 2017, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 111, S. Res. 112, and S. Res. 113.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the debate time on the nomination of Judge Gorsuch during Wednesday's session of the Senate be divided as follows: that following leader remarks the time until 11 a.m. be equally divided; that the time from 11 a.m. until 12 noon be under the control of the majority; that the time from 12 noon until 1 p.m. be