

intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(f) **STAFF QUALIFICATIONS.**—Any person appointed to the staff of or employed by the Commission shall be an individual of integrity and impartiality.

(g) **CONDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commission may offer employment on a conditional basis to a prospective employee pending the completion of any necessary security clearance background investigation. During the pendency of any such investigation, the Commission shall ensure that such conditional employee is not given and does not have access to or responsibility involving classified or otherwise restricted material.

(2) **TERMINATION.**—If a person hired on a conditional basis as described in paragraph (1) is denied or otherwise does not qualify for all security clearances necessary for the fulfillment of the responsibilities of that person as an employee of the Commission, the Commission shall immediately terminate the employment of that person with the Commission.

(h) **EXPEDITED SECURITY CLEARANCE PROCEDURES.**—A candidate for executive director or deputy executive director of the Commission and any potential employee of the Commission shall, to the maximum extent possible, be investigated or otherwise evaluated for and granted, if applicable, any necessary security clearances on an expedited basis.

SEC. 6. SUPPORT SERVICES.

During the 180-day period following the date of enactment of this Act, the General Services Administration shall provide administrative support services (including offices and equipment) for the Commission.

SEC. 7. TERMINATION OF THE COMMISSION.

The Commission shall terminate 90 days after the date on which the Commission submits its final report under section 3.

SEC. 8. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

(a) **INAPPLICABILITY OF FACA.**—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) does not apply to the Commission.

(b) **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE.**—To the maximum extent practicable, each meeting of the Commission shall be open to members of the public.

SEC. 9. FUNDING OF COMMISSION.

Notwithstanding section 1346 of title 31, United States Code, or section 611 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1998, of funds made available for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 to the Departments of Justice, State, and any other appropriate agency that are otherwise unobligated, not more than \$3,500,000 shall be available for the interagency funding of activities of the Commission under this Act. Funds made available to the Commission pursuant to this section shall remain available for obligation until December 31, 1999.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, the Finance Committee requests unanimous consent to conduct a hearing on Friday, May 1, 1998 beginning at 9 a.m. in room 215 Dickson.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

• Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, the amendment I added to the conference version of the 1998 Supplemental Spending Bill deals with how oil is valued for the purpose of collecting royalties. This is not about royalty rates, but rather how that value is established.

Under the Outer Continental Shelf Leasing Act and the Minerals Leasing Act, the Minerals Management Service (MMS) is required to value the oil where it is removed from the ground. The MMS wants, instead, to value the oil after the industry has added significantly to its value (through marketing and transportation costs). Such a change would have the effect of increasing the tax collected on any set amount of oil at a time when the oil prices are at an all time low. The economy and jobs will be affected by such an arbitrary increase in costs. And finally, the MMS wants to make this change in the law through regulation. Mr. President, changing the law is the job of Congress, not the MMS.

My amendment prohibits the MMS from implementing this proposed change next month and prohibits the agency from acting before the end of the current fiscal year. This will give Congress time to weigh in on this matter, instead of letting the MMS arbitrarily change the law through the exercise of its rule-making authority.

Last year, this Congress, in the FY 1998 Interior Appropriations Bill specifically directed MMS to report back to the committees prior to finalizing the new regulations after numerous members expressed concern. MMS has ignored this direction, and neither the Energy and Natural Resources Committee nor the Appropriations Committee was notified that MMS proposed to finalize the new rule this June.

I support a valuation program that ensures the state and national governments receive all royalties due to them while maintaining fundamental principles of equity. I support the MMS in its efforts to simplify the valuation system and collect the government's fair share. However, it cannot be done at in a manner that changes federal law. •

WE THE PEOPLE . . . THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION

• Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, on May 2-4, 1998, more than 1200 students from across the nation will be in Washington, D.C. to compete in the national finals of the We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution program. I am proud to announce that a class from Lahainaluna High School from Lahaina, Maui will represent the State of Hawaii. These young scholars have worked diligently to reach the national finals by winning competitions in their home state.

The distinguished students representing Hawaii are: Iao Eisenberg, Tiffany Fujiwara, Jasmine Hentz, Erin Lockhart, William Myers, Leah Nakamura, Ryan Ott, Michael Prieto, Julie Reed, Sal Saribay, Justin Serrano, Jeffrey Shelton, Yee Ning Tay, Kerry Tsubaki.

I would also like to recognize their teacher, Ms. Ruth Hill, who deserves much of the credit for the success of the class. The district coordinator, Ms. Jane Kinoshita, also contributed a significant amount of time and effort to help these students reach the national finals.

The We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution program is the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The three-day national competition simulates a congressional hearing whereby students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge while they evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary constitutional issues. The simulated congressional hearing consists of oral presentations by the students before panels of adult judges.

Administered by the Center for Civic Education, the We the People . . . program, has provided curricular materials at upper elementary, middle, and high school levels for more than 75,000 teachers and 24 million students nationwide. Members of Congress and their staff enhance the program by discussing current constitutional issues with students and teachers.

The We the People . . . program is designed to help students achieve a reasoned commitment to the fundamental values and principals that bind Americans together as a people. The program also fosters civic dispositions or traits of public and private character conducive to effective and responsible participation in politics and government.

I wish to extend my best wishes to these constitutional scholars in the upcoming We the People . . . national finals and commend them for their great achievement of reaching this level of competition. •

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

• Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday, April 30, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,499,894,559,513.94 (Five trillion, four hundred ninety-nine billion, eight hundred ninety-four million, five hundred fifty-nine thousand, five hundred thirty-seven dollars and ninety-four cents).

One year ago, April 30, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,353,971,000,000 (Five trillion, three hundred fifty-three billion, nine hundred seventy-one million).

Five years ago, April 30, 1993, the federal debt stood at \$4,254,084,000,000 (Four trillion, two hundred fifty-four billion, eighty-four million).