

(B) if determined necessary by the expert, a further investigation of such offices relating to—

(i) the equal employment opportunity process; and

(ii) any alleged discriminatory employment-related actions, including any alleged violations of Federal law.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 1999, the independent expert shall report on the review conducted under subsection (a) (and any recommendations for action) to Congress and the Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the full Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet on Wednesday May 6, 1998, and Thursday May 7, 1998, at 10 a.m. in closed session, to mark up the Department of Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on Wednesday, May 6, 1998 at 10:00 a.m. on Tribal Sovereign Immunity, focusing on torts. The hearing will be held in room 106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 6, 1998 at 11:30 am to hold closed mark-up on the FY 99 Intelligence Authorization.

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be permitted to meet on May 6, 1998 at 2:00 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a hearing.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Communications Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Wednesday, May 6, 1998, at 9:30 a.m. on oversight of the Common Carrier Bureau.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on European Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 6, 1998 at 2:00 p.m. to hold a hearing.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FORESTS AND PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Forests and Public Land Management of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be granted permission to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 6, for purposes of conducting a subcommittee hearing which is scheduled to begin at 2:30 p.m. The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on S. 94, a bill to provide for the orderly disposal of Federal lands in Nevada, and for the acquisition of certain environmentally sensitive lands in Nevada, and for other purposes; and H.R. 449, a bill to provide for the orderly disposal of certain Federal lands in Clark County, Nevada, and to provide for the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands in the State of Nevada.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO BRUCE BOHNSACK

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to give a brief tribute to Mr. Bruce Bohnsack from my home state of North Dakota. Mr. Bohnsack operates a grain and soybean farm which has been in his family for more than 100 years. As a producer, Bruce has a keen interest in farm policy issues and has been active in the affairs of a farmer owned credit cooperative—the Farm Credit System.

Bruce's active involvement in Farm Credit has been on various levels. He is a member of the Federal Land Credit Association of Fargo and has served as director of that association for 18 years. Bohnsack joined the board of the St. Paul Farm Credit Bank in 1987—at a time of crisis for the bank and the Farm Credit System as a whole.

The Farm Credit System of the mid-1980s was fighting a battle for survival. One of the things that saved the System was the leadership of Farm Credit board members like Bruce Bohnsack. Bruce and his colleagues in St. Paul made a number of sound business decisions of critical importance to the institutions and the farmers they serve. One such decision was to combine the St. Paul and St. Louis Farm Credit Banks to create AgriBank, FCB. This first voluntary merger of Farm Credit banks in the history of the System helped to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the wholesale bank while retaining local accountability at the association level.

Bruce and other farmer elected lenders in the System also provided helpful input to the Committee on Agriculture when we drafted the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987. The 1987 Act is one of the great success stories in recent years for which Congress and the Farm Credit System can both be justifiably proud. Since 1987 the Farm Credit System has

experienced a remarkable turn around. It is now better capitalized and better positioned to serve farmers than ever before in its history. Congress played a role in this turn around by providing Farm Credit with a loan not a grant. The principal and interest on the loan made possible under the 1987 legislation is being repaid by the System several years ahead of schedule.

Bruce Bohnsack's interest in farm policy issues is also reflected in his service on the St. Paul District Farm Credit Council and national Farm Credit Council boards of directors. As chairman of these two boards, Bruce was as an advocate for Farm Credit in the halls of Congress and in North Dakota. While he no longer serves on these boards, you can bet he will continue to be active in North Dakota Farmers Union, North Dakota State Township Officers Association, his local Lutheran church and other farm and community groups.

On behalf of North Dakota farmers, I would like to thank Bruce Bohnsack for his years of service to the Farm Credit System and American agriculture. We wish him well in the years ahead.●

FIRST LIEUTENANT JOSEPH VAN OOSTERHOUT RETIRES FROM MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to honor First Lieutenant Joseph Van Oosterhout, Post Commander of the Michigan State Police. He is retiring from the State Police after 23 years and 9 months of dedicated service.

First Lieutenant Van Oosterhout joined the Michigan State Police after serving in the United States Navy during the Vietnam War from 1967 to 1971. After serving in the military, he attended Western Michigan University where he worked towards the Bachelor's Degree he later earned while with the State Police. He was enlisted in the Michigan State Police in 1974, first stationed at the Benton Harbor Post and later to the Detroit Post and White Pigeon Post. In 1982, Van Oosterhout was promoted to Sergeant in the Traffic Services Division in Lansing. In 1987, he was assigned as Assistant Post Commander at the Ypsilanti Post. In 1992, he was promoted to Post Commander at the Iron Mountain Post. Also in 1992, he was transferred to the Negaunee Post as Post Commander where he has served ever since.

Throughout his career, First Lieutenant Van Oosterhout has received a great deal of recognition for his excellent service. In 1988, he was recognized as being the police officer in Michigan who had contributed most to traffic safety. He received one Departmental Award for breaking a crime ring and another for making a drug bust that had ties to several states.

Van Oosterhout, husband to Becky and father to Leah, Sarah, Joe and Andrew, will be remembered for his excellent service and dedication to the Department of State Police, friendly demeanor and concern for those he worked with. I extend my warmest congratulations to him on his retirement.●

MICHIGAN SPORTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to honor five men who have been newly elected to the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame. Earvin "Magic" Johnson, one of basketball's all time greatest players who began his career with Michigan State University and gained further fame as a Los Angeles Laker; Leonard "Red" Kelly, one of the Red Wings greatest players who was recently named one of the 50 greatest players in NHL history; Bob Reynolds, the legendary sports broadcaster at the radio station WJR in Detroit; Isiah Thomas, possibly the greatest Detroit Piston of all time; and George Webster, All American linebacker from Michigan State University.

In addition to the inductees, Peter Karmanos, Jr., Chairman of the Compuware Corporation and owner of the Carolina Hurricanes of the National Hockey League will receive the Gerald R. Ford Sports Person of the Year Award. All of these men will be honored at the 44th Annual Induction Dinner of the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame on Wednesday evening, May 20, 1998 at Detroit's Cobo Center.

I want to extend my sincerest congratulations to all of these men. I am confident that the event will be a great success.●

COVERDELL A+ SAVINGS ACCOUNTS BILL—EXPLANATION OF VOTES

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, the Senate recently voted on an important piece of legislation, the Coverdell A+ Savings Account bill. I believe it is important to clarify my position on several amendments offered to this bill.

In general, I believe the best way to ensure effective education policy is to direct as many dollars and resources as possible to the local level. By giving localities the resources and flexibility they need, I am confident that communities and parents will best direct those funds to meet the unique and diverse needs of their children. For this reason, I support the Coverdell A+ Savings Account bill. This legislation, puts resources at the most local level: with parents. Parents will now have the ability to save for and meet the educational needs of their children. Whether it means hiring a tutor for their child, buying a home computer, finding an alternative educational setting, or saving for college, parents will be in the position to take positive steps towards providing a positive educational future for their children.

For similar reasons, I supported an amendment offered by Senator GORTON to give states the option of (1) continuing to receive federal education programs under the current funding system; (2) receiving federal education programs as a block grant going directly to the state without federal regulations; or (3) receiving federal education programs in a block grant going directly to the local education agency without federal regulations. By allowing local education agencies to receive federal resources without federal red tape and bureaucracy, we will be putting more power and flexibility in the hands of the people most closely involved with educating children. As a safe-guard to ensure that an appropriate level of federal funding continues, Senator GORTON's amendment insists that if future funding dips below the current level of funding, the programs would be forced back into the current categorical funding.

I also supported an amendment offered by Senators MACK and D'AMATO which would allow states to use existing block grant funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to fund teacher testing and merit pay programs in the state. I believe this amendment would allow states to develop important programs to help ensure quality teachers in the classroom and to pay those teachers accordingly.

Finally, I supported an amendment that was offered by Senator KAY BALLEW HUTCHISON which clarified the federal position on same-sex schools. This amendment would allow same-sex classrooms and schools to be eligible to receive federal funding as long as comparable education opportunities are offered for students of both sexes. I believe the federal government must allow states and communities to find creative solutions to meeting the educational needs of their children.

Again, I support the philosophy behind the Coverdell bill and the Gorton amendment which places control, resources, and decision making with parents and local communities. Unfortunately, most of the amendments offered by Democrats, while noble ideas, fund their programs by eliminating the education savings accounts and by focusing the programs and power at the federal level. While there were many interesting ideas debated, such as the amendment offered by Senator LEVIN which would increase the lifetime learning education credit for teachers or the amendment offered by Senator LANDRIEU to provide incentive grants for Blue Ribbon Schools, each proposal was paid for by defunding the A+ Savings Accounts. For that reason, I could not support these weakening amendments.

Senator GLENN offered an amendment which would eliminate the ability of parents to use their tax-free savings to pay for private school tuition or homeschooling expenses. The provision included in the A+ bill is identical to the provision supported by President

Clinton and the Democrats in the Balanced Budget Act which allows parents to save \$500 a year for college expenses. The Balanced Budget Act, which was signed into law by the President, does not differentiate between private and public colleges. It is inconsistent to subsidize a more limited number of college students and not offer the same benefit in K-12 education.

Senator MOSELY-BRAUN offered an amendment to eliminate the Coverdell A+ Savings accounts and to use the money instead to create a federal school construction program. While I recognize the need for adequate school construction, I believe the Coverdell bill more adequately addresses the needs for school construction through a provision included in the legislation offered by Senator GRAHAM. This provision fosters public private partnerships for school construction and maintains the function of school construction at the local level. The bill provides for \$3 billion in tax-exempt bond funding for school construction.

I voted against an amendment offered by Senator KENNEDY which would forgive a maximum of \$8,000 in student loans for teachers entering "high need areas or subjects" and would pay for this provision by eliminating the A+ Savings Accounts. I opposed this amendment because the Higher Education Reauthorization Act approved by the Senate Labor Committee contains similar incentives of student loan forgiveness for teachers entering inner-city or rural teaching environments.

I opposed an amendment offered by Senator BOXER which would create a new \$250 million federal after-school program. While I support after-school mentoring and tutoring programs for children, I believe these programs should be operated at the local level. In addition, the federal government already funds 4 after-school care programs and 19 existing federal programs that provide tutoring and mentoring for students on a one-on-one basis.

I am encouraged by the Senate's action on the Coverdell A+ Savings bill and the amendment offered by Senator GORTON. I look forward to additional debate on education issues and new and innovative proposals to place greater control and resources at the local level.●

REGARDING INTERNATIONAL PROJECT EVALUATING AND FACILITATING INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. ROTH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 224, submitted earlier by Senator STEVENS and others.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 224) expressing the sense of the Senate concerning an international project to evaluate and facilitate