

alone. A trail of 100,000 refugees were left to fend for themselves. Many were slaughtered as they waited for evacuation planes that never came.

Because America's war effort in Laos was covert, perhaps the largest covert action in our history, the sacrifices and service of the Hmong and Lao veterans is still largely untold. As a result, many of these brave people are still suffering from poverty, discrimination, and persecution.

The legislation we passed today is a tribute to this sacrifice. It is a small but meaningful step in honoring and fulfilling our promise to the Hmong people. This legislation will simply waive the literacy requirement to all Hmong Veterans and their spouses to become citizens of the United States—a nation for which so many of them spilled their blood and a nation that has long ignored their unique struggle.

The need for this legislation is acute because the Hmong had no written language until recently, and because so many Hmong children were fighting for America when they should have been in school.

I want to thank my colleagues for their support. In particular, I also want to take a moment to thank and honor Congressman BRUCE VENTO. He, more than anyone in the Congress, has dedicated himself to ensure that Hmong and Lao veterans receive the honor and respect that has been so long deserved and too long delayed. I also want to thank Chairman HATCH, for guiding this bill through the Judiciary Committee and Senator RUSS FEINGOLD who, with Senator HERB KOHL, has worked so hard to see that this bill is passed. Mostly, I thank the Hmong people. You gave us your lives and your families. You are American heroes.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am very pleased that the Senate today will pass H.R. 371, the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act. I was proud to join my colleague from Minnesota, Senator WELLSTONE, as an original co-sponsor of S. 890, which was companion legislation to H.R. 371. I commend Senator WELLSTONE for his leadership on this issue and for his persistence in pressing for the Judiciary Committee and the full Senate to consider the bill.

By passing this legislation today, the Senate recognizes the contribution of Hmong and Lao immigrants who risked their lives to support U.S. interests in Southeast Asia. The Senate not only recognizes the valor of Hmong and Lao veterans, but also helps them achieve their goal of citizenship.

Mr. President, Wisconsin is home to the third largest Hmong community in the United States. We are proud of the Hmong veterans and their families who sacrificed so much for U.S. national security during the Vietnam War and have done so much to enrich Wisconsin and the United States. I have had the opportunity to meet many Lao and Hmong veterans and their families as I travel throughout Wisconsin. I am struck by the profound importance

they place on becoming citizens of the United States. The most important thing to many of these individuals is to become legal citizens of the country they risked their lives to help and that they now call home. This bill is the least we can do to help repay the huge debt we owe these brave individuals.

This legislation is truly long overdue. The Hmong and Lao veterans of the U.S. Secret Army should not have had to suffer for so long in obscurity after the end of the Vietnam War. It should not have taken so long for the United States to finally dedicate a monument in Arlington National Cemetery to the Hmong and Lao veterans of the U.S. Secret Army, when it did so in May 1997.

Mr. President, the monument at Arlington National Cemetery to the Hmong veterans contains important language for us to remember as we pass this legislation today in the Senate. The monument in Arlington Cemetery, dedicated by many of the Hmong veterans and their families from Wisconsin and across the United States, reads as follows:

DEDICATED TO THE U.S. SECRET ARMY IN LAOS
1961-1973

In memory of the Hmong and Lao combat veterans and their American Advisors who served freedom's cause in Southeast Asia. Their patriotic valor and loyalty in the defense of liberty and democracy will never be forgotten "You will never be forgotten. (in Laotian and Hmong)—Lao Veterans of America, May 15, 1997."

Mr. President, I am particularly proud of the Lao Veterans of America chapters throughout the state of Wisconsin—in Milwaukee, Green Bay, Madison, Wausau, Stevens Point, Sheboygan, Oshkosh, Eau Claire and elsewhere. They played a positive role in helping to establish this monument as well as pressing the Congress to enact this legislation. They have also worked with the national headquarters of the Lao Veterans of America and its chapters across the United States to reconstruct many of the records of the veterans, which were destroyed in Laos at the end of the Vietnam War.

More than a thousand Hmong veterans from Wisconsin were in Washington, D.C. last week to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War in Laos and the passage of this legislation in the House of Representatives. Over four thousand Hmong veterans marched down Pennsylvania Avenue and attended ceremonies at the Vietnam War Memorial, the U.S. Capitol and Arlington National Cemetery.

Mr. President, during the course of our consideration of this bill in Committee, an objection was raised to a provision of the bill that specifically mentions the Lao Veterans of America as an organization whose certification of the eligibility of an individual veteran as eligible for the benefits of this bill could be considered by the Attorney General. Given that there is reason to believe that the federal government has few remaining records of which Lao

and Hmong participated in the U.S. Secret Army, I think it is entirely reasonable for the Attorney General to consider documentation provided by the Lao Veterans of America or other Lao or Hmong veterans' organizations. In fact, I understand that the Lao Veterans of America was named in the House legislation because it has maintained extensive records of the Hmong and Lao veterans of the U.S. Secret Army. Frankly, I do not understand why this provision became such a sticking point, but in order to move this bill along and get it to the President's desk as quickly as possible, I agreed to a modification of this provision.

I am pleased that we reached agreement that this provision should not be removed in its entirety. And I emphasize, and I know that the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee agrees, that a negative inference should not be drawn from the fact that the name of this specific organization, the Lao Veterans of America, was removed from the bill. Even though its name was removed from the bill, the Lao Veterans of America can still provide documentation to the Attorney General, and the Attorney General may consider it.

Mr. President, I again want to thank Senator WELLSTONE, Senator KOHL, and Senator HATCH for their work to facilitate passage of this important legislation that will help Hmong veterans finally attain their well-deserved goal of U.S. citizenship.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill, as amended, be read the third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be placed in the RECORD at the appropriate place as if read.

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

The bill (H.R. 371), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, if the Senator will yield a moment, I thank the Senator from Kansas and others for passing this bill. I know this has been a major cause of our retiring colleague from the other body, BRUCE VENTO. We had this before the Judiciary Committee this morning. I thank Senator HATCH and the others who helped make it possible to bring it out. It rights a grievous wrong, and it is a good piece of legislation.

Mr. BROWNBACK. I thank my colleague for mentioning that. It is important that we are getting this bill passed. It is right to bring attention to this matter. These are people who have done great things for us and for our country. It should be taken care of. I am glad it cleared through committee so well.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the majority leader,

in consultation with the Democratic Leader, pursuant to Public Law 105-389, announces the appointment of Sylvia Stewart of Mississippi to serve as a member of the First Flight Centennial Federal Advisory Board, vice Wilkinson Wright of Ohio.

INDIAN EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND RELATED SERVICES DEMONSTRATION ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1999

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 526, S. 1509.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1509) to amend the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992, to emphasize the need for job creation on Indian reservations, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with amendments; as follows:

(The parts of the bill intended to be stricken are shown in boldface brackets.)

S. 1509

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 "Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act Amendments of 1999".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS, PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) Indian tribes and Alaska Native organizations that have participated in carrying out programs under the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.) have—

(A) improved the effectiveness of employment-related services provided by those tribes and organizations to their members;

(B) enabled more Indian and Alaska Native people to prepare for and secure employment;

(C) assisted in transitioning tribal members from welfare to work; and

(D) otherwise demonstrated the value of integrating employment, training, education and related services.

(E) the initiatives under the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 should be strengthened by ensuring that all Federal programs that emphasize the value of work may be included within a demonstration program of an Indian or Alaska Native organization;

(F) the initiatives under the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 should have the benefit of the support and attention of the officials with policymaking authority of—

(i) the Department of the Interior;

(ii) other Federal agencies that administer programs covered by the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are to demonstrate how Indian tribal governments can integrate the employment, training and related services they provide in order

to improve the effectiveness of those services, reduce joblessness in Indian communities, foster economic development on Indian lands, and serve tribally-determined goals consistent with the policies of self-determination and self-governance.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE INDIAN EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND RELATED SERVICES DEMONSTRATION ACT OF 1992.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 3 of the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. 3402) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (3) as paragraphs (2) through (4), respectively; and

(2) by inserting before paragraph (2) the following:

"(1) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term 'federal agency' has the same meaning given the term 'agency' in section 551(1) of title 5, United States Code."

(b) PROGRAMS AFFECTED.—Section 5 of the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. 3404) is amended by striking "job training, tribal work experience, employment opportunities, or skill development, or any program designed for the enhancement of job opportunities or employment training" and inserting the following: "assisting Indian youth and adults to succeed in the workforce, encouraging self-sufficiency, familiarizing Indian Youth and adults with the world of work, facilitating the creation of job opportunities and any services related to these activities".

(c) PLAN REVIEW.—Section 7 of the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. 3406) is amended—

(1) by striking "Federal department" and inserting "Federal agency";

(2) by striking "Federal departmental" and inserting "Federal agency";

(3) by striking "department" each place it appears and inserting "agency"; and

(4) in the third sentence, by inserting "statutory requirement," after "to waive any".

(d) PLAN APPROVAL.—Section 8 of the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. 3407) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting before the period at the end the following: ", including any request for a waiver that is made as part of the plan submitted by the tribal government";

(2) in the second sentence, by inserting before the period at the end the following: ", including reconsidering the disapproval of any waiver requested by the Indian tribe".

(e) JOB CREATION ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED.—Section 9 of the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. 3407) is amended—

(1) by inserting "(a) IN GENERAL.—" before "The plan submitted"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(b) JOB CREATION OPPORTUNITIES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, including any requirement of a program that is integrated under a plan under this Act, a tribal government may use a percentage of the funds made available under this Act (as determined under paragraph (2)) for the creation of employment opportunities, including providing private sector training placement under section 10.

"(2) DETERMINATION OF PERCENTAGE.—The percentage of funds that a tribal government may use under this subsection is the greater of—

"(A) the rate of unemployment in the service area of the tribe up to a maximum of 25 percent; or

"(B) 10 percent.

"(c) LIMITATION.—The funds used for an expenditure described in subsection (a) may only include funds made available to the Indian tribe by a Federal agency under a statutory or administrative formula."

[SEC. 4. ALASKA REGIONAL CONSORTIA.

[The Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 is amended by adding at the end the following:

["SEC. 19. ALASKA REGIONAL CONSORTIA.

["(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, subject to subsection (b), the Secretary shall permit a regional consortium of Alaska Native villages or regional or village corporations (as defined in or established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) to carry out a project under a plan that meets the requirements of this Act through a resolution adopted by the governing body of that consortium or corporation.

["(b) WITHDRAWAL.—Nothing in subsection (a) is intended to prohibit an Alaska Native village from withdrawing from participation in any portion of a program conducted pursuant to this Act.".]

SEC. [5.] 4. REPORT ON EXPANDING THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM INTEGRATION.

Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Labor, and the tribes and organizations participating in the integration initiative under this Act shall submit a report to the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives on the opportunities for expanding the integration of human resource development and economic development programs under this Act, and the feasibility of establishing Joint Funding Agreements to authorize tribes to access and coordinated funds and resources from various agencies for purposes of human resources development, physical infrastructure development, and economic development assistance in general. Such report shall identify programs or activities which might be integrated and make recommendations for the removal of any statutory or other barriers to such integration.

SEC. [6.] 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee amendments be agreed to, the bill be read a third time and passed, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The committee amendments were agreed to.

The bill (S. 1509), as amended, was passed.

AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3629 just received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows: