

Sixth, the House bill does not clarify the tax treatment of childcare subsidies. I want to ensure that parents in the military can continue their dedicated service with the knowledge that their children are well taken care of.

The military provides extensive childcare benefits to its employees. Employees at DoD-owned facilities provide childcare services while other areas with non-DoD owned facilities contract out their childcare.

When Congress passed the Tax Reform Act of 1986, we included a provision stating that qualified military benefits are excluded from income. It is not absolutely clear whether childcare provisions are covered under this provision.

The proposal in the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act would clarify that any childcare benefit provided to military personnel would be excludable from income.

Seventh, the House bill does not allow students at the Service Academies to use their education savings account funds. In contrast, the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act does permit penalty-free withdrawals from education savings accounts and qualified tuition programs made on account of the attendance of the account holder or beneficiary at any of the Service Academies. The amount of the funds that can be withdrawn penalty-free is limited to the costs of advanced education in that calendar year.

Eighth, the House does not allow the IRS to suspend the tax-exempt status of terrorist organizations. Under current law, there is no procedure for the IRS to suspend the tax-exempt status of an organization.

The Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act would allow the suspension of the tax-exempt status of an organization for any period during which the organization is designated or identified by Executive Order as a terrorist organization.

Ninth, the House bill does not provide tax relief for families of those killed in the Space Shuttle *Columbia*. Current law provides for income tax, estate tax, and death benefit relief to soldiers who are killed in a combat zone, victims of the September 11 attacks, the Oklahoma City bombing victims, and the victims of the anthrax attacks.

The crew of the Space Shuttle *Columbia* was heroic in every sense of the word. We have a duty to those who lost their lives for the advancement of science and increasing our knowledge of the world we live in. The Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act would make all of the above benefits available to the families of the *Columbia* crew.

The tenth and final difference between the House bill before us and the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act is that the bill before us is not offset. In contrast, the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act is completely offset by strengthening the collection of taxes from people who have renounced their U.S. citizenship in order to avoid U.S. taxes.

However, some of our colleagues in the House have objected to this provision. So in the interest of enacting these important military tax provisions as quickly as possible, the Senate changed the offset to a simple extension of the present law customs user fees.

The Senate amendment to the House bill would add these very important nine provisions. In addition, it would add an offset that the House has not opposed this offset in the past. We hope that this compromise on our part will allow them to pass the provisions from the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act that we have included in this amendment.

The passage of the death gratuity payments provision is an important first step. However, there are thousands of men and women in uniform that are depending on us to pass the other ten provisions included in the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act.

Simply put, there is absolutely no excuse if Congress fails to pass the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act this year.

Everyday, our military men and women fight for our freedom and the freedom of every American. Their sacrifices are great. Passing the other ten provisions included in the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act is not a lot for them to ask of Congress.

I urge my colleagues in the House to pass the Senate amendment to the Fallen Patriots Act of 2003.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I want to express my full support for the passage of H.R. 3365, the Fallen Patriots Tax Relief Act. Earlier this year, the Senate passed S. 704, introduced by myself, Senator WARNER, Senator MCCAIN, Senator ALLEN, and Senator BEN NELSON, which would have increased the death gratuity paid to the survivors of deceased members of our military from \$6,000 to \$12,000. Further, it would make this increase retroactive to September 11, 2001. I am pleased that H.R. 3365 incorporates this legislation.

There is no better way to honor the memories of fallen soldiers than to ensure that their loved ones receive the support they deserve. The death gratuity is provided within days to the family of the servicemember killed while on active duty. These funds help the family to deal with immediate needs during this difficult time. Given the sacrifices of our troops currently in Iraq, I believe that this increase in assistance is far past due.

H.R. 3365 also ensures that the death gratuity is tax free. I fully support this legislation, and believe that it sends a strong message of support to our troops. As the brave men and women of our military continue to go in harm's way in defense of our Nation, it is crucial that they do so with the confidence that their families will have our full support should tragedy occur.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the McCain-Baucus-Grassley amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that

the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; that the title amendment be agreed to; that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, en bloc; and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The amendment (No. 2051) was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The title amendment (No. 2052) was agreed to, as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: "An Act to amend title 10, United States Code, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the death gratuity payable with respect to deceased members of the Armed Forces and to exclude such gratuity from gross income, to provide additional tax relief for members of the Armed Forces and their families, and for other purposes."

The bill (H.R. 3365), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

(The bill will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

GIVING PRIORITY TO PASSING TAX RELIEF LEGISLATION FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 257, submitted earlier today by Senator LANDRIEU.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 257) expressing the sense of the Senate that Congress should give priority to passing legislation to provide tax relief for United States military personnel and should offset the cost of such tax relief with legislation preventing individuals from avoiding taxes by renouncing United States citizenship.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, today the Senate passed the Military Tax Fairness Act of 2003, about \$1.1 billion in tax relief for our military families. I support this bill. We all support this bill. In fact, we passed this unanimously or near unanimously on a couple of previous occasions. We are revisiting this bill again today because the House of Representatives does not like the offset we used to pay for the bill. We paid for it by taxing individuals who renounce their United States citizenship in order to avoid paying U.S. taxes.

It is astounding to me that this bill keeps getting bounced back and forth between the Senate and the other body over this issue. We are talking about tax relief for military families and we want Americans who are exploiting tax loop holes to step up and make that relief possible. Most of these people have known great financial success. They were blessed by the economic opportunity that our nation's liberty gives us and the free enterprise system which make those fortunes possible.

Those blessings were secured by our military personnel. Every year, the United States Treasury loses about \$80 million on individuals who decide that they would prefer to have their cake and eat it too. They want American markets, they want American prestige, they want American stability, but they do not want the obligations that accrue to American citizenship. All the Senate was saying is if you benefited from this nation's security, you should be willing to pay for it.

When the Senate first considered this legislation, I had hoped to include a tax credit for the private sector employers of our National Guard and Reserve. When our Guard and Reserves answer the call to serve they leave jobs, homes, and most of all, their families behind. Many employers continue to pay all or part of the salaries of those employees who get called up. My legislation would provide those patriotic employers with a tax credit for paying up to 50 percent of the salaries for their Guard and Reserve employees.

I understand that my legislation cannot be included in this bill. So I am introducing a sense of the Senate resolution to put us on record as supporting these employers. The resolution states that we should pay for this tax credit by closing the expatriation loophole.

The facts are simple, and they are laid out in this resolution. Since 2001, the President has signed tax cuts amounting to \$1.75 trillion. Today, military families will get their first taste at direct relief. Yet, this bill amounts to less than .1 percent of the tax relief that the Government has doled out. No one could justify this to voters. So it's been happening behind closed doors—in conference reports, and parliamentary maneuvering. This resolution is a first step to putting a bright, hot spotlight on the truth. The leadership of the House Ways and Means Committee is more interested in protecting expatriate corporations, than it is in providing meaningful tax benefits to the men and women of our Armed Forces.

I am glad for what we are doing in this bill, but there is so much more that can be done and should be done. Personally, I believe that a military tax vehicle should be used to discuss military tax issues. However, the Senate cannot stand in the way of immediate relief to the families of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice in battle. For that reason, we are passing this resolution today to send a signal that this imbalance must come to an end.

I appreciate the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee for agreeing to this resolution in conjunction with the underlying bill. I look forward to working with them in the future on giving this tax relief to America's employers.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and preamble be agreed to en bloc, that the motion to reconsider be

laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 257) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 257

Whereas Congress is responsible for providing United States military personnel with the equipment, supplies, and other resources needed to preserve our freedom;

Whereas Congress is responsible for providing United States military personnel with a comprehensive compensation package;

Whereas, since 2001, Congress has passed and the President has signed legislation providing for \$1,750,000,000,000 in tax relief;

Whereas the Senate has passed legislation providing for \$1,100,000,000 in additional tax relief for United States military personnel and their families;

Whereas United States citizens benefit from economic opportunities which arise from the liberty protected by United States military personnel;

Whereas the United States loses approximately \$80,000,000 per year in tax revenue from individuals who renounce United States citizenship;

Whereas the Senate has unanimously passed legislation which prevents individuals from avoiding taxes by renouncing United States citizenship as an offset to the cost of providing tax relief for the 1,400,000 active duty military personnel and the 1,200,000 members of the National Guard and Reserves; and

Whereas Congress has asked the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on the total compensation package provided for United States military personnel in order to ensure that the unique needs of military personnel are addressed: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) Congress should give priority to passing legislation to provide tax relief for—

(A) United States military personnel, including those serving in the National Guard and Reserves; and

(B) the employers of active duty members of the National Guard and Reserves; and

(2) the cost of such tax relief should be offset by legislation which prevents individuals from avoiding taxes by renouncing United States citizenship.

FIFTY YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE BY AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S.J. Res. 22, which was introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res 22) recognizing the Agricultural Research Service of the Department of Agriculture for 50 years of outstanding service to the Nation through agricultural research.

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

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, on November 3, 2003, the Agricultural Research Service, the primary research agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will celebrate its 50th anniversary. To commemorate this special anniversary, I, along with Senator HARKIN, am offering a Senate joint resolution to recognize the important contributions the Agricultural Research Service provides to the agriculture community and to the Nation. Although ARS can trace its heritage back to early 19th century seed collection activities in the U.S. Patent Office, it was officially organized on November 2, 1953, when USDA consolidated most of its research functions into the newly named Agricultural Research Service. Today, ARS is a public institution that conducts agricultural research exclusively for the public good. The research is often long-term and costly, and unlikely to be undertaken by the private sector. The ARS discoveries and innovations touch the lives of every American through the food we eat, the clothes we wear, and the environment in which we live.

I am very proud of the accomplishments ARS has made in my State. For example, ARS established the Lower Mississippi Delta Nutrition Intervention Research Initiative in 1995 to improve the health of residents of the Mississippi Delta through nutrition intervention research. ARS has partnered with, among others, the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and Alcorn State University in Lorman to identify food and nutrition problems in communities and to design nutrition interventions to determine how and why people make food choices, and how those choices could be improved. Another fine example of the partnership between the ARS and our Mississippi universities is the Southern Horticultural Laboratory in Poplarville. This ARS small fruit research facility, in cooperation with Mississippi State University, has led in the establishment of a vibrant blueberry industry in South Mississippi and other Gulf Coast States and has now expanded to include research on ornamentals and vegetables.

The ARS Catfish Genetics Research Unit at Stoneville, in partnership with Mississippi State University, bred a new catfish variety, NWAC 103, and released it in February 2001. This marks one of the few times genetic research has improved catfish since the industry started in the United States in the late 1950s. Since then, catfish has become one of the most successful aquacultural enterprises, thereby guaranteeing a plentiful supply of high-quality fish to consumers. Also, ARS scientists, in partnership with the University of Mississippi scientists, invented a new natural product-based algacide for use in catfish aquaculture, thus providing an alternative to synthetic herbicides.

A special ARS project in the late 1990s in Mississippi showed that farm runoff is not damaging Mississippi