

Whereas when airborne fibers are inhaled or swallowed, the damage is permanent and irreversible;

Whereas these fibers can cause mesothelioma, asbestosis, lung cancer, and pleural diseases;

Whereas asbestos-related diseases can take 10 to 50 years to present themselves;

Whereas the expected survival rate of those diagnosed with mesothelioma is between 6 and 24 months;

Whereas little is known about late stage treatment and there is no cure for asbestos-related diseases;

Whereas early detection of asbestos-related diseases would give patients increased treatment options and often improve their prognosis;

Whereas asbestos is a toxic and dangerous substance and must be disposed of properly;

Whereas nearly half of the more than 1,000 screened firefighters, police officers, rescue workers, and volunteers who responded to the World Trade Center attacks on September 11, 2001, have new and persistent respiratory problems;

Whereas the industry groups with the highest incidence rates of asbestos-related diseases, based on 2000 to 2002 figures, were shipyard workers, vehicle body builders (including rail vehicles), pipefitters, carpenters and electricians, construction (including insulation work and stripping), extraction, energy and water supply, and manufacturing;

Whereas the United States imports more than 30,000,000 pounds of asbestos used in products throughout the Nation;

Whereas asbestos-related diseases kill 10,000 people in the United States each year, and the numbers are increasing;

Whereas asbestos exposure is responsible for 1 in every 125 deaths of men over the age of 50;

Whereas safety and prevention will reduce asbestos exposure and asbestos-related diseases;

Whereas asbestos has been the largest single cause of occupational cancer;

Whereas asbestos is still a hazard for 1,300,000 workers in the United States;

Whereas asbestos-related deaths have greatly increased in the last 20 years and are expected to continue to increase;

Whereas 30 percent of all asbestos-related disease victims were exposed to asbestos on naval ships and in shipyards;

Whereas asbestos was used in the construction of virtually all office buildings, public schools, and homes built before 1975; and

Whereas the establishment of a "National Asbestos Awareness Day" would raise public awareness about the prevalence of asbestos-related diseases and the dangers of asbestos exposure; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designate the first day of April 2005 as "National Asbestos Awareness Day".

AMENDING THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1270, which was received from the House.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1270) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund financing rate.

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

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent the bill be read a third time and

passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 1270) was read the third time and passed.

FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 88, submitted earlier today by Senators AKAKA, SARBANES, COCHRAN, BAUCUS, and others.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 88) designating April 2005 as "Financial Literacy Month."

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

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent the resolution and preamble be agreed to en bloc, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 88) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 88

Whereas at the end of 2004, Americans carried 657,000,000 bank credit cards, 228,000,000 debit cards, and 550,000,000 retail credit cards;

Whereas based on the number of total United States households, there are now 6.3 bank credit cards, 2.2 debit cards, and 6.4 retail credit cards per household;

Whereas Americans consumer credit debt continues to increase, and has reached a level of in excess of \$2,100,000,000,000 as of year end 2004, of which \$791,000,000,000 is revolving consumer credit;

Whereas a United States Public Interest Research Group and Consumer Federation of America analysis of Federal Reserve data indicates that the average household with debt carries approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000 in total revolving debt;

Whereas Americans owe \$766,200,000,000 on home equity loans and lines of credit, more than twice as much as in 1998;

Whereas Americans converted \$41,000,000,000 in real estate equity into spendable cash in the third quarter of 2004 alone;

Whereas the current level of personal savings as a percentage of personal income is at one of the lowest levels in history, 2 percent, a decline from 7.5 percent in the early 1980s;

Whereas through November 2004, 1,869,343 individuals filed for bankruptcy;

Whereas a 2002 Retirement Confidence Survey found that only 32 percent of workers surveyed have calculated how much money they will need to save for retirement;

Whereas only 30 percent of those surveyed in a 2003 Employee Benefit Trend Study are confident in their ability to make the right financial decisions for themselves and their families, and 25 percent have done no specific financial planning;

Whereas approximately 10 percent of individual households remain unbanked, i.e., not

using mainstream, insured financial institutions;

Whereas expanding access to the mainstream financial system provides individuals with lower cost, safer options for managing their finances and building wealth;

Whereas a greater understanding and familiarity with financial markets and institutions will lead to increased economic activity and growth;

Whereas financial literacy empowers individuals to make wise financial decisions and reduces the confusion of an increasingly complex economy;

Whereas the Spring 2004 Student Monitor Financial Services Survey found that 46 percent of college students have a general purpose credit card in their own name and 37 percent carry over a credit card balance from month to month;

Whereas 45 percent of college students are in credit card debt, with the average debt being \$3,066;

Whereas only 26 percent of 13- to 21-year-olds reported that their parents actively taught them how to manage money;

Whereas a 2004 study by the Jumpstart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy found an increase in high school seniors' scores on an exam about credit cards, retirement funds, insurance, and other personal finance basics for the first time since 1997; however, 65 percent of students still failed the exam;

Whereas a 2004 survey of States by the National Council on Economic Education found that 49 States include economics, and 38 States include personal finance, in their elementary and secondary education standards, up from 48 States and 31 States, respectively, in 2002;

Whereas personal financial management skills and life-long habits develop during childhood;

Whereas personal financial education is essential to ensure that individuals are prepared to manage money, credit, and debt, and become responsible workers, heads of households, investors, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and citizens; and

Whereas Congress found it important enough to ensure coordination of Federal financial literacy efforts and formulate a national strategy that it established the Financial Literacy and Education Commission in 2003 and designated the Office of Financial Education of the Department of the Treasury to provide support for the Commission: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2005 as "Financial Literacy Month" to raise public awareness about the importance of financial education in the United States and the serious consequences that may be associated with a lack of understanding about personal finances; and

(2) calls on the Federal Government, States, localities, schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and the people of the United States to observe the month with appropriate programs and activities.

CONGRATULATING THE MONTANA FFA ON ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 89 which was submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 89) congratulating the Montana FFA on its 75th anniversary.

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

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, this year marks the 75th anniversary of the Montana FFA, an organization near and dear to my heart. As a former blue jacket myself, I know firsthand how much this organization contributes to the development of leadership skills. A number of my staff, including my chief of staff, are former Montana FFA officers. I couldn't be prouder to introduce today, along with my colleague, Senator BAUCUS, a resolution congratulating the Montana FFA on its 75th anniversary.

With over 2,500 current members from 75 chapters, the Montana FFA provides outstanding career and technical education to students across the State. Over 40,000 Montanans have participated in FFA programs.

As this resolution states, the mission of the FFA, a federally chartered national organization, is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agriculture education. In Montana, that mission is achieved every day. Whether focusing on public speaking skills, or developing business expertise, or learning about horticulture at the new greenhouse at Park High in Livingston, FFA ensures that our students are ready to embrace all the opportunities the future holds for them.

When the national FFA began in 1928, it did so with just 33 members. Today, it has blossomed into a powerful force for career education, with over 475,000 members. Each year, the halls of Congress are filled with the familiar blue-and-gold jackets, as FFA students from across the nation come to share their thoughts and concerns with us.

The contributions of both the Montana FFA and the national FFA are numerous, and I am pleased to have the opportunity to honor this great organization today. I know this program will continue to flourish and offer our youngsters skills in leadership, personal growth, and career options in the agricultural community as it has done every day since its inception back in Kansas City.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 89) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 89

Whereas in 2005, the Montana FFA, chartered in 1930, celebrates its 75th anniversary as a premier student development organization where members gain life and leadership skills;

Whereas more than 40,000 Montanans have been FFA members;

Whereas Montana FFA alumni provide outstanding leadership to agriculture and agribusiness at the local, State, and Federal levels;

Whereas the Montana FFA Association is the largest career and technical student organization in the State, with over 2,550 members from 75 chapters;

Whereas the mission of the FFA is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agriculture education;

Whereas FFA is an integral component of agriculture education in the public school system; and

Whereas the National FFA Organization is a federally-chartered organization:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Montana FFA on its 75th anniversary; and

(2) directs the Secretary of the Senate to transmit to the Montana FFA an enrolled copy of this resolution for appropriate display.

HOLOCAUST COMMEMORATION WEEK

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 90 which was submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 90) designating the week of May 1, 2005, as "Holocaust Commemoration Week."

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

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 90) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 90

Whereas the year 2005 marks the 60th anniversary of the end of the Holocaust, which was ruthlessly and tragically carried out by Nazi Germany under the leadership of Adolf Hitler and his collaborators;

Whereas the Holocaust involved the murder of millions of innocent Jewish men, women, and children along with millions of others, and an enormity of suffering inflicted on the many survivors through mistreatment, brutalization, violence, torture, slave labor, involuntary medical experimentation, death marches, and numerous other acts of cruelty that have come to be known as "genocide" and "crimes against humanity"; and

Whereas in the past 60 years, the Holocaust has provided the peoples of the world with an object lesson in the importance of compassion, caring, and kindness; an awareness of the dangers inherent in bigotry, racism, intolerance, and prejudice; and an understanding of the importance of an appreciation of the sensitivity to diversity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of May 1, 2005, as "Holocaust Commemoration Week";

(2) commemorates the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II and the liberation of the concentration camps; and

(3) encourages all Americans to commemorate the occasion through reflection, acts of compassionate caring, and learning about the terrible consequences and lessons of the Holocaust.

EUROPEAN ARMS EMBARGO ON THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 91 submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 91) urging the European Union to maintain its arms export embargo on the People's Republic of China.

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

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to support an updated version of S. Res. 59, which I submitted on February 17 that calls on the European Union to maintain its arms embargo against the People's Republic of China.

I am pleased that all of the original cosponsors of S. Res. 59 are joining me in submitting this revised legislation.

This resolution states our strong support of the United States arms embargo on China and urges the European Union to strengthen, enforce, and maintain its embargo as well. It encourages the EU to examine its current arms control policies, close any loopholes, and examine their trade with China in light of serious human rights concerns.

The human rights abuses at Tiananmen Square in 1989 led the United States and the EU to impose this embargo. Now is not the time to lift it. If the EU proceeds down this road, there will be negative consequences to our relationship—an outcome their officials claim they do not want. This resolution expresses the Senate's view that maintaining the embargo is in our mutual security interests.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 91) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 91

Whereas, on June 4, 1989, the Communist Government of the People's Republic of China ordered the People's Liberation Army to carry out an unprovoked, brutal assault on thousands of peaceful and unarmed demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, resulting