

S. Res. 439. A resolution designating the third week of April 2006 as “National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week”; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. ALLARD (for himself and Mrs. DOLE):

S. Res. 440. A resolution congratulating and commending the members of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Teams, and the United States Olympic Committee, for their success and inspired leadership; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. Con. Res. 88. A concurrent resolution urging the Government of China to reinstate all licenses of Gao Zhisheng and his law firm, remove all legal and political obstacles for lawyers attempting to defend criminal cases in China, including politically sensitive cases, and revise law and practice in China so that it conforms to international standards; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 333

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 333, a bill to hold the current regime in Iran accountable for its threatening behavior and to support a transition to democracy in Iran.

S. 633

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 633, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of veterans who became disabled for life while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States.

S. 877

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 877, a bill to provide for a biennial budget process and a biennial appropriations process and to enhance oversight and the performance of the Federal Government.

S. 908

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 908, a bill to allow Congress, State legislatures, and regulatory agencies to determine appropriate laws, rules, and regulations to address the problems of weight gain, obesity, and health conditions associated with weight gain or obesity.

S. 1035

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1035, a bill to authorize the presentation of commemorative medals on behalf of Congress to Native Americans who served as Code Talkers during foreign conflicts in which the United States was involved during the 20th century in recognition of the service of those Native Americans to the United States.

S. 1881

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr.

AKAKA), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ALLEN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS), the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH), the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. TALENT) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1881, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the Old Mint at San Francisco otherwise known as the “Granite Lady”, and for other purposes.

S. 2025

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2025, a bill to promote the national security and stability of the United States economy by reducing the dependence of the United States on oil through the use of alternative fuels and new technology, and for other purposes.

S. 2201

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) were added as co-

sponsors of S. 2201, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to modify the mediation and implementation requirements of section 40122 regarding changes in the Federal Aviation Administration personnel management system, and for other purposes.

S. 2249

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2249, a bill to eliminate the requirement that States collect Social Security numbers from applicants for recreational licenses.

S. 2322

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2322, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to make the provision of technical services for medical imaging examinations and radiation therapy treatments safer, more accurate, and less costly.

S. 2563

At the request of Mr. TALENT, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2563, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require prompt payment to pharmacies under part D, to restrict pharmacy co-branding on prescription drug cards issued under such part, and to provide guidelines for Medication Therapy Management Services programs offered by prescription drug plans and MA-PD plans under such part.

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2563, supra.

S. RES. 313

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 313, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that a National Methamphetamine Prevention Week should be established to increase awareness of methamphetamine and to educate the public on ways to help prevent the use of that damaging narcotic.

AMENDMENT NO. 3244

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3244 intended to be proposed to S. 2454, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for comprehensive reform and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3463

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3463 intended to be proposed to S. 2454, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for comprehensive reform and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3470

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr.

ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3470 intended to be proposed to S. 2454, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for comprehensive reform and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3528

At the request of Mr. THOMAS, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3528 intended to be proposed to S. 2454, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for comprehensive reform and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS—APRIL 5, 2006

By Mr. ENSIGN (for himself and Mr. DEWINE):

S. 2554. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the permissible use of health savings accounts to include premiums for non-group high deductible health plan coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise to introduce legislation to help individuals, small businesses, and the uninsured afford health insurance coverage. Today, 60 percent of Americans obtain health insurance coverage through their employers. The system of employer-sponsored health insurance has long provided coverage to the vast majority of America's workers and their families. However, a significant number of Americans, particularly those who work for small businesses, lack access to coverage through the employment-based system.

Employees of small businesses often go uninsured or purchase health insurance coverage on their own because continuing double-digit cost increases and burdensome state regulations are making it difficult for small employers to offer health insurance coverage.

Health insurance is valuable for a number of reasons. People who are insured are protected against uncertain and high medical expenses and are more likely to receive needed and appropriate health care. Having health insurance is also associated with improved health outcomes and lower mortality, so employees with health insurance are more likely to be productive workers.

Health savings accounts have become an important option for individuals and small businesses who have struggled to afford health insurance coverage.

The Affordability in the Individual Market Act, also known as the AIM Act, builds on the foundation of a previously passed law that established Health Savings Accounts. These accounts allow individuals with high-deductible health insurance to set aside money, tax free, up to a set limit, to use for routine medical expenses.

You can make a contribution to Health Savings Accounts or your employer can make a contribution to the

account. If you don't use all the money in a year you can roll it over, tax free, to meet future expenses.

Today, individuals trying to build up a nest egg for their retiree health expenses through a Health Savings Account are not able to use these funds to purchase their health insurance, except under limited circumstances.

The AIM Act would expand the definition of what is considered a "qualified medical expense" under the Internal Revenue Code to allow individuals and families who purchase high-deductible health plans on their own to use their Health Savings Accounts to pay plan premiums. It seems completely reasonable to allow these individuals to pay high-deductible health plan premiums with Health Savings Account dollars.

I ask my colleagues to consider cosponsoring this responsible, commonsense legislation.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I am cosponsoring a bill today, along with Senator ENSIGN and Senator FRIST, to add another option for individuals and families to purchase affordable health insurance.

The law currently allows individuals and families to set aside tax-free savings for lifetime healthcare needs in Health Savings Accounts that are combined with a high deductible health insurance plan. This has already made health care more affordable. This important legislation expands on the foundation of Health Savings Accounts by allowing individuals and families to use their Health Savings Accounts to pay the premiums of their health insurance plans.

This is the right thing to do, individuals and families need affordable health insurance options. I urge my colleagues to join Senator ENSIGN, Senator FRIST and me in supporting this legislation.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2596. A bill to modify the boundaries for a certain empowerment zone designation; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today with Senator COLLINS to introduce legislation to help reverse the devastating population decline and economic distress that has plagued individuals and businesses in Aroostook County, the northernmost county in Maine. What the bill does is simple, it will bring all of Aroostook County under the Empowerment Zone (EZ) program. The legislation is identical to a bill that we introduced in the 108th Congress and was included in the FY 2004 Agriculture Appropriations bill in 2003 as passed by the Senate.

To fully grasp the importance of this legislation, it is necessary to understand the unique situation facing the residents of Aroostook County. "The

County", as it is called by Mainers, is a vast and remote region of Maine. As the northernmost county, it shares more of its border with Canada than its neighboring Maine counties. It has the distinction of being the largest county east of the Mississippi River. Its geographic isolation is even more acute when considering that the county's relatively small population of 73,000 people are scattered throughout 6,672 square miles of rural countryside. Aroostook County is home to 71 organized townships, as well as 125 unorganized townships much of which is forest land and wilderness.

As profound as this geographic isolation may seem, it is the economic isolation and the recent out-migration that has had the most devastating impact on the region. The economy of northern Maine has a historical dependence upon its natural resources, particularly forestry and agriculture. While these industries served the region well in previous decades, and continue to form the underpinnings of the local economy, many of these sectors have experienced decline and can no longer provide the number and type of quality jobs that residents need.

While officials in the region have put forward a Herculean effort to redevelop the region, with nearly 1,000 new jobs at the Loring Commerce Centre alone, Aroostook County is still experiencing a significant "job deficit", and as a result continues to lose population at an alarming rate. Since its peak in 1960, northern Maine's population has declined by 30 percent. Unfortunately, the Main State Planning Office predicts that Aroostook County will continue losing population as more workers leave the area to seek opportunities and higher wages in southern Maine and the rest of New England.

In January 2002, a portion of Aroostook County was one of two regions that received Empowerment Zone status from the USDA for out-migration. The entire county experienced an out-migration of 15 percent from 86,936 in 1990 to 73,938 in 2000. Moreover, a shocking 40 percent of 15 to 29-year-olds left during the last decade.

The current zone boundaries were chosen based on the criteria that Empowerment Zones be no larger than 1,000 square miles, and have a maximum population of 30,000 for rural areas. The lines drawn for the Aroostook County Empowerment Zone were considered to be the most inclusive and reasonable given the constraints of the program. It should be noted as well that the boundaries were drawn based on the 1990 census, making the data significantly outdated at the start and included the former Loring Air Force Base and its population of nearly 8,000 people, which had closed nearly 8 years before the designation, taking its military and much of its civilian workforces with it. The Maine State Planning Office estimated that the base closure resulted in the loss of 3,494 jobs directly related to the base and