

H.R. 4286. An act to award a congressional gold medal to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in recognition of her courageous and unwavering commitment to peace, nonviolence, human rights, and democracy in Burma.

H.R. 4454. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3050 Hunsinger Lane in Louisville, Kentucky, as the "Iraq and Afghanistan Fallen Military Heroes of Louisville Memorial Post Office Building", in honor of the service men and women from Louisville, Kentucky, who died in service during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

H.R. 5135. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 201 West Greenway Street in Derby, Kansas, as the "Sergeant Jamie O. Murgans Post Office Building".

H.R. 5220. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3800 SW 185th Avenue in Beaverton, Oregon, as the "Major Arthur Chin Post Office Building".

H.R. 5400. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 160 East Washington Street in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, as the "Sgt. Michael M. Kashkoush Post Office Building".

H.R. 5472. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2650 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, as the "Julia M. Carson Post Office Building".

H.R. 5489. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6892 Main Street in Gloucester, Virginia, as the "Congresswoman Jo Ann S. Davis Post Office."

At 5:54 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1195) to amend the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users to make technical corrections, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3490. An act to transfer administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal lands from the Bureau of Land Management to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to take such lands into trust for Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians of the Tuolumne Rancheria, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4332. An act to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act to require the Council to establish a single telephone number that consumers with complaints or inquiries could call and be routed to the appropriate Federal banking agency or State bank supervisor, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 5631. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1155 Seminole Trail in Charlottesville, Virginia, as the "Corporal Bradley T. Arms Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 5712. An act to require disclosure by Federal contractors of certain violations relating to the award or performance of Federal contracts; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-339. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Alaska urging Congress to permanently repeal the federal estate tax; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 7

Whereas the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 temporarily phased out but did not permanently eliminate the federal estate tax; and

Whereas our form of government is premised on the right to enjoy the fruit of one's labor, to own one's own possessions, and to pass on one's bounty to one's heirs; and

Whereas, when a person works for a lifetime to build assets, saving and investing money, building a business, or buying and developing land, that person has a moral right to pass those assets on to the person's family without being penalized with inheritance taxes; and

Whereas there is a fundamental problem of double taxation when a decedent's survivors are forced to pay an inheritance tax on assets acquired by the decedent with after-tax dollars; and

Whereas we need a tax system that encourages lifelong saving, investment, and business activity, and not one that can result in heirs liquidating or selling family businesses that are often asset rich but cash poor, thereby destroying those ongoing job-producing businesses simply to fund increased government consumption; and

Whereas the persistent uncertainty created by sec. 901 of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, which provides for the reinstatement of federal estate tax law for decedents dying after December 31, 2010, prevents families and small businesses from fully benefitting from the temporary repeal; be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives strongly urges the United States Congress to support, work to pass, and vote for the immediate and permanent repeal of the federal estate tax.

POM-340. A resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona urging Congress to authorize the Department of the Treasury to intercept federal tax refunds to pay overdue victim restitution; to the Committee on Finance.

SENATE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL NO. 1004

Whereas, between \$500 million and \$1 billion in victim restitution, fines, fees and surcharges are past due and owed to courts across Arizona; and

Whereas, under current law, the Internal Revenue Service is authorized to intercept tax refunds for child support debts, state and federal tax debt and federal agency debt, but not for the collection of court-ordered restitution, fines and fees; and

Whereas, Arizona law currently allows state tax refunds to be intercepted for past-due court obligations, and in fiscal year 2007, approximately \$7.1 million was collected through this program and distributed to victims and various criminal justice agencies throughout the state; and

Whereas, legislation has been introduced in Congress, S. 1287, that would add state court debts to the list of debts that can be withheld from federal tax refunds. It is estimated that approximately \$70 million could be collected for Arizona if federal tax refunds were subject to intercept by the Internal Revenue Service; and

Whereas, mechanisms already are in place to intercept this debt and such a plan would result in no loss to the federal budget. The federal tax intercept proposal is a fair and simple way to enforce debts owed without implementing a tax increase.

Wherefore your memorialist, the Senate of the State of Arizona, the House of Representatives concurring, prays.

1. That the United States Congress enact S. 1287 or other similar legislation that would authorize the United States Department of the Treasury to intercept federal tax refunds to pay overdue victim restitution and other financial obligations ordered by state and local criminal and traffic courts.

2. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies of this Memorial to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and each Member of Congress from the State of Arizona.

POM-341. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Louisiana urging Congress to extend the expiration deadline of the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005; to the Committee on Finance.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20

Whereas, hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck the United States in August and September 2005, and were considered the most devastating natural disasters to hit the United States; and

Whereas, in response to these natural disasters Congress in December 2005, enacted the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act (GO Zone Act) of 2005 to provide desperately needed economic relief, and

Whereas, the GO Zone Act provides federal tax incentives and bonds to rebuild the economies of those areas impacted by hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma; and

Whereas, even though the entire state of Louisiana was included in the hurricanes Katrina and Rita disaster areas, the provisions of the GO Zone Act apply only to certain designated parishes; and

Whereas, the GO Zone Act applies to the following parishes: Acadia, Allen, Ascension, Assumption, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Evangeline, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, Livingston, Orleans, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, Sabine, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, Vermilion, Vernon, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana; and

Whereas, the GO Zone Act provides low-income housing credits, rehabilitation tax credits for restoring commercial buildings, employer-provided housing benefits, fifty percent bonus depreciation on certain new property investments, deductions for demolition and clean-up costs, and net operating loss carrybacks; and

Whereas, many of the GO Zone Act provisions expired at the end of 2007 and other provisions are due to expire at the end of 2010 for certain parishes; and

Whereas, many Louisiana citizens and businesses can directly benefit from the Act's incentives if the GO Zone Act is extended; therefore, be it,

Resolved That the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes the Congress of the United States to extend the expiration deadline of the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005; be it further,

Resolved That a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

POM-342. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho urging the Idaho congressional delegation to take measures to improve quality care in the skilled nursing facilities in Idaho; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 6

Whereas, the federal survey process through which skilled nursing facilities are inspected is a federal process which is not available for significant state deviation or modification; and

Whereas, the federal survey process was developed in 1987 and was designed for typical residents in skilled nursing facilities at that time; and

Whereas, the acuity levels of patients now being cared for in skilled nursing facilities are significantly elevated from those of twenty years ago; and

Whereas, the federal survey process does not allow for trained, experienced surveyors to provide consulting of any kind when surveying a skilled nursing facility; and

Whereas, the punitive and negative design of the federal survey process often negatively impacts the morale, turnover and motivation of the workforce of the skilled nursing facility; and

Whereas, the costs of the very expensive federal survey process outweigh the benefits; and

Whereas, the state of Idaho has produced a survey process for assisted living providers which is not punitive, provides for significant consulting and, as current feedback indicates, a confidence building and learning experience for employees of the facility; now, therefore, be it,

Resolved by the members of the Second Regular Session of the Fifty-ninth Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives and the Senate concurring therein. That the Idaho Legislature urges the Idaho congressional delegation, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, resident advocate groups in Idaho and industry representatives to negotiate how to improve the survey process in skilled nursing facilities in Idaho and that the Idaho Legislature supports measures to improve quality care in the skilled nursing facilities in Idaho and the Idaho Legislature also affirms our desire to be efficient with tax dollars; be it further

Resolved, That the Idaho Legislature urges the Idaho congressional delegation to request support and necessary funding from the United States Congress for a pilot project in the state of Idaho to implement the changes negotiated by the aforementioned groups; be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives be, and she is hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of this Memorial to the President of the United States, to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Congress, and the congressional delegation representing the state of Idaho in the Congress of the United States.

POM-343. A resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Massachusetts urging Congress to create an office of the national nurse; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

RESOLUTION

Whereas, nurses are highly valued and trusted by the public and, in addition to administering health care, are often called upon to deliver educational messages about health maintenance and disease prevention; and

Whereas, there are thousands of nurses and nurse educators currently living and working in the commonwealth; and

Whereas, a national effort is underway to create an Office of the National Nurse; and

Whereas, on March 8, 2006, Congresswoman Lois Capps, a nurse representing the 23rd Congressional District of California, introduced H.R. 4903 in the House of Representatives to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish an Office of the National Nurse; and

Whereas, H.R. 4903 enjoyed bipartisan support and 42 Members of the House of Representatives signed on to the bill; and

Whereas, the Office of the National Nurse would raise awareness of health issues and promote good health through education and community outreach; and

Whereas, the Office of the National Nurse would effectively complement the Office of the Surgeon General of the United States; and

Whereas, the Office of the National Nurse would support valuable initiatives, such as producing weekly media broadcasts to promote health, increasing the number of nurse educators, facilitating the deployment of nurses to underserved areas, promoting volunteerism within the Medical Reserves Corps and partnering with existing agencies to deliver nursing assistance and education to communities, particularly communities in crisis; Therefore be it

Resolved, That the Massachusetts General Court memorializes the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to create an Office of the National Nurse as described in H.R. 4903 similar legislation; and be it further

Resolved, That copy of these resolutions be forwarded by the Clerk of the House of Representatives to the President of the United States, the presiding officer of each branch of Congress and the members thereof from the commonwealth.

POM-344. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas expressing its support for the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1624

Whereas, Homeland Security Presidential Directive Nine (HSPD-9) has tasked the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to coordinate, "counter-measure research and development of new methods for detection, prevention technologies, agent characterization and dose response relationships for high-consequence agents"; and

Whereas, at present no facilities in the United States have adequate containment, security, equipment and infrastructure to meet the requirements identified in HSPD-9; and

Whereas, to meet this need, the Department of Homeland Security and its federal partners initiated plans for a National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF); and

Whereas, the NBAF will enhance protection from both natural and intentional threats by providing and integrating high-biosecurity facilities, thus increasing our nation's capacity to assess potential threats to both human and animal life; and

Whereas, the Department of Homeland Security is seeking a location to build the \$451 million, 500,000 square foot, NBAF facility; and

Whereas, A site on the campus of Kansas State University is one of six sites actively under consideration by the Department of Homeland Security as possible locations for the NBAF facility; and

Whereas, the State of Kansas recognizes the NBAF as a critical national investment and pledges its support for the funding and construction of the NBAF in order to protect human and animal health from both natu-

rally occurring and intentionally introduced disease threats; and

Whereas, Kansas is the ideal location for the NBAF. Kansas is a world leader in bio-science, particularly in the areas of animal health and vaccines, infectious diseases, and food safety. Kansas also has in place an exceptionally well qualified workforce; and

Whereas, in demonstration of their zealous support for locating the NBAF in Kansas, Governor Kathleen Sebelius and the Kansas Bioscience Authority have initiated a task force to lead Kansas' bid for the NBAF. This task force consists of prominent industry leaders, public officials—including the entire Kansas congressional delegation—representatives from the Kansas legislature, producer groups and leaders of prominent academic institutions; and

Whereas, the State of Kansas is committed to partnering with the federal government to support biosecurity. As part of this commitment, Kansas—along with the federal government—invested \$54 million in the nation's most modern biosecurity laboratory, the Biosecurity Research Institute at Kansas State University; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, by the Senate of the State of Kansas, the House of Representatives concurring therein. That the Kansas legislature pledges its support for Kansas State University and the City of Manhattan, in their bid to have the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility located in Kansas, and that the Legislature underscores its commitment to provide any and all support necessary to ensure the location of the NBAF in Kansas; and be it further

Resolved, That the Kansas Legislature purposefully encourages the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to consider Kansas' demonstrated expertise and experience with research, its existing facilities and security infrastructure, and the human resources already in place that make Kansas a natural fit for the location of this new federal laboratory; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be provided to President Bush and Vice President Cheney, Secretary Chertoff of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Secretary Schafer of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Secretary Leavitt of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Kansas congressional delegation and Governor Kathleen Sebelius.

POM-345. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Michigan urging Congress to reverse funding cuts to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 165

Whereas, the grants funded through the Byrne Justice assistance Grant Program are used throughout Michigan for statewide and local law enforcement efforts. The Byrne program grants assist the apprehension, prosecution, adjudication, detention, and rehabilitation of offenders. The funding supports training, equipment, additional personnel, and other measures to increase the effectiveness of law enforcement and victim assistance; and

Whereas, the cuts in the fiscal year 2008 appropriations for the Byrne program that were approved by Congress and signed into law are staggering. Michigan will lose two-thirds of the funding received in the previous year, down to only \$3.2 million. For programs such as the Office of Drug Control Policy, the slashing of the funds available will cripple the office and force the cancellation of many worthwhile programs. The effects on other state and local programs will

be similarly drastic. With the state's budget situation still in question due to negative trends in the national economy that threaten to overwhelm state efforts to restore growth, we clearly cannot replace the lost federal money; and

Whereas, as the federal government continues to grapple with the budget and economic growth measures, there is still time for Congress to correct the looming crisis in law enforcement efforts in the states. We know that cuts in funding now, when the economic picture is growing bleak, will make the need to effective law enforcement a victim assistance more important than ever. Congress must restore funding to the Byrne program to fiscal year 2007 levels through a supplemental appropriations act in order to prevent the curtailment or cancellation of key criminal justice programs; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we memorialize the United States Congress to reverse cuts to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-346. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana urging Congress to take the actions necessary to ensure adequate funding for veterans' health care; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 23

Whereas, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs provides medical care to veterans who have risked their lives to protect the security of the nation; and

Whereas, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has the largest integrated health care system in the United States; and

Whereas, the missions of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs include providing health care to veterans, educating and training health care personnel, conducting medical research, serving as backup to the United States Department of Defense, and supporting communities in times of crisis; and

Whereas, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs provides a wide range of specialized services to meet the unique needs of veterans, including treatment and care for spinal cord injury, blindness, traumatic brain injury, post traumatic stress disorder, amputation injuries, mental health issues, substance abuse, and conditions requiring long-term care; and

Whereas, federal discretionary funding for veterans' health care is controlled by the executive branch and congress through the budget and appropriations process; and

Whereas, the United States Governmental Accountability Office report in 2005 highlighted the lack of resources and staffing available to the United States Veterans Administration for processing an increasing backlog of veterans' claims; and

Whereas, discretionary funding for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs lags behind both medical inflation and the increased demands for services; and

Whereas, former United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi has publicly stated that the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has been struggling to provide health care to the rapidly rising number of veterans who require health care; and

Whereas, it is imperative that the members of congress make funding health care for veterans a major priority. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the United States Congress to ensure adequate funding for veterans' health care. Be it further

Resolved, That the legislature does hereby express profound and enduring gratitude to veterans for sacrifices made while serving in the United States Armed Forces, particularly those who suffer as a result of injuries sustained during military service. Be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the president and vice president of the United States and to the members of Louisiana's congressional delegation.

POM-347. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Louisiana urging Congress to adopt and implement the recommendations of the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 28

Whereas, the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission was established by the Congress of the United States in Public Law 108-136, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2004; and

Whereas, between May 2005 and October 2007, the commission conducted an in-depth analysis of the benefits and services available to veterans, service members, their survivors, and their families to compensate and provide assistance for the effects of disabilities and deaths attributable to military service; and

Whereas, the commission examined the appropriateness and purpose of benefits, benefit levels and payment rates, and the processes and purposes used to determine eligibility for such services; and

Whereas, the commission reviewed past studies on these subjects, the legislative history of these benefit programs, and related issues that have been debated repeatedly over several decades; and

Whereas, in federal fiscal year 2006, the Department of Veterans' Affairs expended over forty billion dollars on a wide array of these benefits and services for veterans, service members, their survivors and their families; and

Whereas, the commission identified eight principles that it believes should guide the development and delivery of future benefits for veterans, service members, and their families; and

Whereas, the following are those eight principles:

(1) Benefits should recognize the often enormous sacrifices of military service as a continuing cost of war, and commend military service as the highest obligation of citizenship.

(2) The goal of disability benefits should be rehabilitation and reintegration into civilian life to the maximum extent possible and preservation of the veterans' dignity.

(3) Benefits should be uniformly based on severity of service-connected disability without regard to the circumstances of the disability (wartime vs. peacetime, combat vs. training, or geographical location).

(4) Benefits and services should be provided that collectively compensate for the consequence of service-connected disability on the average impairment of earnings capacity, the ability to engage in usual life activities, and quality of life.

(5) Benefits and standards for determining benefits should be updated or adapted frequently based on changes in the economic and social impact of disability and impairment, advances in medical knowledge and technology, and the evolving nature of warfare and military service.

(6) Benefits should include access to a full range of health care provided at no cost to

service-disabled veterans. Priority for care must be based on service connection and degree of disability.

(7) Funding and resources to adequately meet the needs of service-disabled veterans and their families must be fully provided while being aware of the burden on current and future generations.

(8) Benefits to our nation's service-disabled veterans must be delivered in a consistent, fair, equitable, and timely manner; and

Whereas, with these principles clearly in mind, the commission has urged the nation to set a firm foundation upon which to shape and evolve a system of appropriate, and generous benefits for the disabled veterans of today and tomorrow. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes the Congress of the United States to adopt and implement the recommendations of the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission. Be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. KENNEDY:

S. 2939. A bill to expand and improve mental health care and reintegration programs for members of the National Guard and Reserve, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BROWN:

S. 2940. A bill to promote green energy production, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. LAUTENBERG:

S. 2941. A bill to improve airport runway safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2942. A bill to authorize funding for the National Advocacy Center; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2943. A bill to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. REID (for Mrs. CLINTON):

S. 2944. A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to examine and improve the child welfare workforce, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VOINOVICH:

S. 2945. A bill to amend title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, to clarify that a discriminatory compensation decision or other practice occurs on the date on which the aggrieved person knew or should have known that the person was affected by the decision or practice, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 2946. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make a stillborn child an insurable dependent for purposes for the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.