

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the bill be read three times, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table with no intervening action or debate, and any statements relating to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (S. 3180) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 3180

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

(a) EXTENSION OF PROGRAMS.—Section 2(a) of the Higher Education Extension Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-81; 20 U.S.C. 1001 note) is amended by striking “June 30, 2008” and inserting “July 31, 2008”.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section, or in the Higher Education Extension Act of 2005 as amended by this Act, shall be construed to limit or otherwise alter the authorizations of appropriations for, or the durations of, programs contained in the amendments made by the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-171), by the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (Public Law 110-84), or by the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-227) to the provisions of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act of 2004.

RECOGNIZING SOIL AS AN ESSENTIAL NATURAL RESOURCE

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the agriculture committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 440 and the Senate proceed to it now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 440) recognizing soil as an essential natural resource, and soils professionals as playing a critical role in managing our Nation's soil resources.

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

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 440) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 440

Whereas soil, plant, animal, and human health are intricately linked and the sustainable use of soil affects climate, water and air quality, human health, biodiversity, food safety, and agricultural production;

Whereas soil is a dynamic system which performs many functions and services vital to human activities and ecosystems;

Whereas, despite soil's importance to human health, the environment, nutrition and food, feed, fiber, and fuel production,

there is little public awareness of the importance of soil protection;

Whereas the degradation of soil can be rapid, while the formation and regeneration processes can be very slow;

Whereas protection of United States soil based on the principles of preservation and enhancement of soil functions, prevention of soil degradation, mitigation of detrimental use, and restoration of degraded soils is essential to the long-term prosperity of the United States;

Whereas legislation in the areas of organic, industrial, chemical, biological, and medical waste pollution prevention and control should consider soil protection provisions;

Whereas legislation on climate change, water quality, agriculture, and rural development should offer a coherent and effective legislative framework for common principles and objectives that are aimed at protection and sustainable use of soils in the United States;

Whereas soil contamination coupled with poor or inappropriate soil management practices continues to leave contaminated sites unremediated; and

Whereas soil can be managed in a sustainable manner, which preserves its capacity to deliver ecological, economic, and social benefits, while maintaining its value for future generations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes it as necessary to improve knowledge, exchange information, and develop and implement best practices for soil management, soil restoration, carbon sequestration, and long-term use of the Nation's soil resources;

(2) recognizes the important role of soil scientists and soils professionals, who are well-equipped with the information and experience needed to address the issues of today and those of tomorrow in managing the Nation's soil resources;

(3) commends soil scientists and soils professionals for their efforts to promote education, outreach, and awareness necessary for generating more public interest in and appreciation for soils; and

(4) acknowledges the promise of soil scientists and soils professionals to continue to enrich the lives of all Americans by improving stewardship of the soil, combating soil degradation, and ensuring the future protection and sustainable use of our air, soil, and water resources.

CONGRATULATING THE BOSTON CELTICS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 596.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 596) congratulating the Boston Celtics on winning the 2008 NBA Championship.

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

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 596) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 596

Whereas, on June 17, 2008, the Boston Celtics won the 2008 National Basketball Association Championship (referred to in this preamble as the “2008 Championship”) in 6 games over the Los Angeles Lakers;

Whereas the 2008 Championship was the 17th world championship won by the Celtics, the most in the history of the National Basketball Association (referred to in this preamble as the “NBA”);

Whereas the 2008 Championship marked the culmination of the greatest single season turnaround in the history of the NBA, as the Celtics improved from a record of 24-58 during the 2007-2008 season to a league-best 66-16 mark during the 2007-2008 campaign;

Whereas the 2008 Celtics NBA Championship team, like all great Celtics champions of the past, epitomized team work, selflessness, character, effort, camaraderie, toughness, and determination;

Whereas the 2008 Celtics honored the rich legacy of their franchise, which was—

(1) established by a legion of all-time greats, including Bill Russell, Larry Bird, John Havlicek, Bob Cousy, Tom Heinsohn, K.C. Jones, Sam Jones, Jo Jo White, Dave Cowens, Kevin McHale, Robert Parish, Dennis Johnson, and Tom “Satch” Sanders; and

(2) masterminded by one of the legendary coaches of all sports, Arnold “Red” Auerbach;

Whereas Celtics managing partner Wyc Grousbeck and the entire Celtics ownership group never wavered from paying the price to raise “Banner #17” to the Garden rafters;

Whereas the 2008 Celtics were brought together by a former Celtics player, Danny Ainge, whose off-season acquisitions of NBA All-Stars Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen earned him the 2008 NBA Executive of the Year Award;

Whereas the Celtics were led by Doc Rivers, who—

(1) oversaw the smooth integration of new superstars and untested young players into the Celtics lineup; and

(2) assembled, and ensured the execution of, a masterful NBA Finals game plan;

Whereas the Celtics featured a 21st century “Big Three” comprised of Paul Pierce, Kevin Garnett, and Ray Allen, 3 veteran players who worked together and never allowed their personal ambition or pursuit of individual statistics to interfere with the goal of the team to win a championship;

Whereas a group of talented young players contributed pivotal roles in the march of the Celtics to the 2008 Championship, including point guard Rajon Rondo, center Kendrick Perkins, forward Leon Powe, guard Tony Allen, and forward Glen “Big Baby” Davis;

Whereas the valuable bench of the Celtics was stocked with veteran role players who made significant contributions during the season, including forward James Posey, guard Eddie House, guard Sam Cassell, forward P.J. Brown, forward Brian Scalabrine, and center Scott Pollard;

Whereas the 2008 Celtics team demonstrated remarkable poise and gained invaluable playoff experience in defeating the Atlanta Hawks, the Cleveland Cavaliers, and the Detroit Pistons in hard-fought series during which every possession counted at both the offensive and defensive ends of the floor;

Whereas, after 26 playoff games, the Celtics ultimately secured the 17th NBA Championship of the franchise in one of the most dominating performances in NBA history, a