

This bill does many things. Most apparently, it creates new national service corps that will enlist the help of our people to address specific areas of national need, including education, energy efficiency, access to health care, economic opportunity for the disadvantaged and disaster relief. It also encourages individuals and nonprofit groups to come up with new and innovative ways to encourage volunteerism and to use the help of volunteers effectively. In addition, it enlists the help of the private sector in addressing important needs in our Nation and community.

There are a number of provisions in this bill that I believe will be of interest particularly to those of us we ascribe to conservative principles. For example, it will benefit thousands of faith-based and religious organizations throughout the country—they are eligible to participate in virtually every new program in the bill. It also preserves a very significant role for State governments at every step. Like many of my colleagues, I would like to see individuals, churches and communities do more and have the Government do less. While this bill does create new Government programs, the programs are specifically designed to foster this type of volunteer spirit and alleviate the need for bloated Government programs throughout Washington to accomplish the same goals.

Senator KENNEDY and I are committed to ensuring that this bill receives broad, bipartisan support, not only among those in Congress, but among the American people as well. Toward that end, Senator KENNEDY and I have agreed that, when this bill is considered in the HELP Committee, which is chaired by the gentleman from Massachusetts, we will work with Members of both parties to offset the spending in this bill and ensure that it is budget neutral. I think we have all heard the cries from our constituents for more fiscal responsibility and discipline in Congress. While this bill does authorize some spending, our commitment to offset these costs will ensure that it will not add to the Federal deficit.

Senator KENNEDY and I have also introduced the Incentive to Serve Tax Act as a companion piece to the Serve America Act. This bill would provide tax incentives to encourage companies to “donate” their employees’ time to charitable service through employer-directed projects. Specifically, the bill would provide companies a tax credit equal to 25 percent of the compensation paid to an employee who performs at least 160 hours of a specified charitable service.

For example, one company presently has a program to provide managerial and educational workers to an underdeveloped school system. This tax incentive would encourage this company to provide even more such service and encourage other companies to utilize their employees with various skills and

knowledge to target specific areas that need to be addressed in the communities where those workers live and work. By doing so, everyone benefits.

These two bills, I believe, represent efforts that all Members can get behind. As we saw at the Service Nation Summit last night, the Presidential candidates from both parties have expressed their support for this bill and for expanding service opportunities nationwide. Indeed, I think that they both recognize that an investment in the generosity and ingenuity of the American people is a pretty safe bet. I encourage all my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be placed in the RECORD, as follows:

SEPTEMBER 11, 2008.

Senator ORRIN HATCH,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR ORRIN: Thank you for all of your work on the Serve America Act and your continued leadership on service issues. I am thrilled to be a partner with you on this critical legislation to expand domestic and international service opportunities for Americans of all ages.

I’m confident that together we will win broad, bipartisan support for this legislation in the new Congress. I am grateful for your commitment to work together to ensure the necessary funding to implement these initiatives and existing service programs. I am committed to working with you to achieve these goals while working within budget constraints and ensuring that all the spending in the bill is paid for with adequate offsets. It will require that the new Administration and new Congress make tough choices, but I think we can both agree that the benefits that will flow to those volunteering and those served will be worth it.

I am sorry that I cannot join you in New York for the National Summit and as always you’ll represent our cause well. I look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to serve their communities and the nation, while tackling some of the greatest challenges of our day.

Sincerely,

EDWARD M. KENNEDY.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 659—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 27, 2008, AS ALCOHOL AND DRUG ADDICTION RECOVERY DAY

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mrs. CLINTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 659

Whereas treatment and long-term recovery from substance use disorders can offer a renewed outlook on life for those who are addicted and their family members;

Whereas more than 23,000,000 people in the United States struggle with substance use disorders;

Whereas people who receive treatment for substance use disorders can lead more pro-

ductive and fulfilling lives, personally and professionally;

Whereas studies have consistently found that treatment is essential for people to be successful in their paths of recovery;

Whereas real stories of long-term recovery can inspire others to ask for help and improve their own lives, the lives of their families, and the entire community;

Whereas it is critical that we educate our community members that substance use disorders are treatable chronic diseases, and that by reaching out to those who suffer from these disorders we can improve the quality of life for the entire community;

Whereas, to help achieve this goal, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, and A&E Television Networks, along with thousands of people from across the country, will hold a Recovery Rally on the Brooklyn Bridge and in City Hall Park in New York City on September 27, 2008; and

Whereas the Recovery Rally will be part of National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 27, 2008, as Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Day; and

(2) calls upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies.

SENATE RESOLUTION 660—CONDEMNING ONGOING SALES OF ARMS TO BELLIGERENTS IN SUDAN, INCLUDING THE GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN, AND CALLING FOR BOTH A CESSATION OF SUCH SALES AND AN EXPANSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS EMBARGO ON ARMS SALES TO SUDAN

Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. CLINTON, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. HATCH, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. SNOWE, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. COLEMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 660

Whereas, since 2003, the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan has killed at least 300,000 people and displaced more than 2,500,000, according to the United Nations;

Whereas, on July 22, 2004, the Senate declared, “the atrocities unfolding in Darfur, Sudan, are genocide”, and on September 9, 2004, then-Secretary of State Colin Powell testified before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate that “genocide has occurred and may still be occurring in Darfur” and “the Government of Sudan and the Janjaweed bear responsibility”;

Whereas, on July 30, 2004, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1556, imposing an arms embargo on non-governmental belligerents in Darfur, requiring “all states [to] take the necessary measures to prevent the sale or supply . . . of arms and related materiel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment, and spare parts for the aforementioned” to those belligerents;

Whereas, on March 29, 2005, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution

1591, extending the embargo imposed by Security Council Resolution 1556 to apply to the Government of Sudan, establishing a sanctions committee to monitor the arms embargo, and prohibiting the Government of Sudan from moving arms into Darfur except with the advance approval of that committee;

Whereas Security Council Resolutions 1556 and 1591 together impose on all United Nations member states the obligation not to sell or supply arms to any belligerent operating in Darfur, including the Sudanese military, and obligate the Government of Sudan not to transfer any arms to Darfur without the approval of the sanctions committee;

Whereas, in September 2006, the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1591, reported to the United Nations Security Council that a senior official of the Government of Sudan told the Panel that “the Government had a sovereign right to transfer weapons and additional military personnel into Darfur without obtaining the specific permission of the Security Council”;

Whereas the Panel of Experts on the Sudan also concluded that “the Government of the Sudan continues to violate the arms embargo by transferring equipment and related weapons into Darfur” and that “[t]he Government of the Sudan remains adamant that it has the right to transfer troops and equipment into Darfur without reference to the sanctions Committee” established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1591;

Whereas, in October 2007, the Panel of Experts on the Sudan reported numerous instances in which the Government of Sudan had transferred arms to Darfur without seeking the approval of the sanctions committee;

Whereas, according to a May 2007 report by Amnesty International, weapons transferred to Sudan from China and Russia are used extensively in Darfur;

Whereas, according to a July 2008 report by the British Broadcasting Corporation, weapons have been transferred to Darfur from China since the arms embargo imposed by Security Council Resolution 1591 became effective;

Whereas, at the insistence of the Governments of China and Russia, arms sales to the Government of Sudan were excluded from the arms embargo imposed by Security Council Resolution 1556, though not from Security Council Resolution 1591, passed 8 months later; and

Whereas, according to data provided by the Government of Sudan to the United Nations, arms sales from China to the Government of Sudan have increased dramatically since the late 1990s, and from 2004 through 2006, China supplied approximately 90 percent of small arms imported into Sudan: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) the United States should seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Darfur and should continue to pursue a political solution as well as the immediate and unfettered deployment of the peacekeeping forces of the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur, without regard to the country of origin of those forces;

(2) the United States supports United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1556 (2004) and 1591 (2005), imposing an arms embargo on all belligerents in Darfur, and supports consistent enforcement of the embargo;

(3) taken together, the obligation imposed by the United Nations on all member states to “take the necessary measures to prevent the sale or supply” of arms to belligerents operating in Darfur, the well-documented existence of arms in Darfur that were transferred from China and Russia, and the insist-

ence of the Government of Sudan that it will not abide by the embargo, lead to the conclusion that continued sale of arms to Sudan under these circumstances violates the United Nations arms embargo imposed by Security Council Resolutions 1556 and 1591;

(4) all United Nations member states should immediately cease all arms sales to the Government of Sudan, until the conflict in Darfur, and the armed conflict related to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, have been peacefully resolved; and

(5) the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations should use the voice and vote of the United States in the United Nations Security Council to seek an expansion of the arms embargo imposed by Security Council Resolutions 1556 and 1591 to cover all of Sudan, with an appropriate exception for non-lethal assistance to the Government of Southern Sudan.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a resolution calling for a stop to the illegal flow of arms into Sudan and an expansion of the United Nations embargo on arms sales to Sudan.

I am happy we have a number of cosponsors of this legislation—as a matter of fact, Senators INHOFE, BROWNBACK, CASEY, CLINTON, DOLE, DURBIN, FEINGOLD, HATCH, ISAKSON, KERRY, LIEBERMAN, MARTINEZ, MENENDEZ, SNOWE, and BOXER.

You can see with Senators spanning the breadth and depth of the Senate, they are recognizing this is one of the most important issues facing planet Earth at this time in trying to stop the genocide in Darfur. Last July 14, the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague requested a warrant for the arrest of Sudan's President Bashir on the charges of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

In part, it was because of his arming the jingaweit militias in Darfur. Our colleagues certainly are urging the prosecution of Bashir for these crimes. But it is now time for the international community and the Congress to take further action in order to prevent the continued export of arms to the regime, the Sudan regime in Khartoum.

This resolution is a call to action to stop the steady stream of arms going from countries such as China and Russia into Darfur. The loopholes in the current UN arms regime are recognized as the main cause for the continued violence and the killings there. Two UN arms embargoes are currently in place prohibiting the Government of Sudan from moving arms into Darfur except with the advance approval of the UN monitoring body.

The embargoes also require foreign nations to take measures to ensure they do not militarily assist anyone in the conflict in Darfur. Yet those embargoes are impossible to enforce since the Government of Sudan can still receive as many weapons as it wants, as long as the government in Khartoum promises that the arms are not going to be used in Darfur, which, of course, it makes those promises and then completely ignores them.

As Sudan's main weapons suppliers, China and Russia, they turn a blind eye

to the fact that the weapons they sold are being used to kill the innocent civilians in Darfur, and the weapons continue to flow into the country.

Now, remember, earlier in the year, China had shipped a huge weapons cache to the regime in Zimbabwe. But fortunately the ship was turned away by the dockworkers in South Africa. In the case of Sudan, however, the Chinese arms reached their final destination.

According to the United Nations, China supplies approximately 90 percent of Sudan's imports of small arms today. Expanding the present embargo would help us prohibit China and Russia from selling to Sudan regardless of where those arms were used in the country.

In the October 2007 report, the U.N. panel of experts cited numerous instances in which the Government of Sudan had egregiously violated the obligations under international law. Likewise, Amnesty International has reported that Chinese and Russian weapons are used extensively in Darfur.

This year, the BBC aired a long expose on the arms flow into Sudan, and that BBC expose proved that Chinese weapons have been transferred to Darfur since the arms embargo was imposed by the United Nations resolution.

So how much more proof do we need? I tried to go to the Sudan last year, but the Government of Sudan denied me a visa. So I had to go in through the back door by going into Chad and going to the border there. As I traveled along that border of Chad and the Sudan, I saw there the squalid refugee camps where 400,000 of those people who had fled Darfur had taken refuge from the killings and the violence.

By the way, the killings and the violence did not stop once they were in the refugee camps in Chad. Since 2003, the conflict in Darfur has killed at least an unbelievable 300,000 people, and it has displaced more than 2.5 million.

They know the horrors of war, hunger, and, unfortunately the women know the horrors of rape. And the attacks on the refugee camps continue.

As a matter of fact, the men in the refugee camps make the women go out to collect the firewood. Anytime they go outside of the perimeter of the refugee camp, they are subject to being attacked and raped.

Governments, religious leaders, human rights activists, and nongovernmental organizations have issued calls to end the genocide. The people of Darfur, nevertheless, remain vulnerable to daily attacks by these militias, armed with Chinese and Russian firearms, and they continue to suffer.

We have been putting the spotlight on Darfur for several years now and nothing gets done. The Government of Sudan makes promises, the United Nations tries to do things, and nothing gets done. Resolutions and envoys have

thus far failed to stop countries from funneling the arms into Darfur.

At the upcoming session of the United Nations General Assembly, we now have another opportunity to name and shame the perpetrators and to halt the immoral export of weapons to the killing fields.

That is what this resolution is about. It pledges to continue United States support for a political solution in Darfur, and it calls for the immediate and unfettered deployment of a United Nations-African Union peacekeeping force, without regard to the country of origin of those forces.

It calls for the immediate end of arms sales to the Government of Sudan from all U.N. member states. That will continue until the conflict in Darfur has been resolved. This resolution calls for the use of the voice and vote of the United States in the Security Council in order to expand that embargo to cover all of the arms going into the Sudan except for an appropriate exception for the nonlethal assistance to the Government of southern Sudan. At this upcoming 63rd U.N. General Assembly, when it opens next week, the U.S. must support this expanded embargo that will try to bring some sense into the madness that is over there. If the U.N. Security Council were to strengthen the embargo regime, it would send a strong signal to the Sudanese Government that their support in the international community is shifting.

It is going to be this Senator's great privilege, as one of two Senators representing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to represent the Senate at the United Nations General Assembly. I plan to bring up this issue over and over again to the U.N. delegates I meet. I hope the Senate will see fit to support this effort by passing this resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 661—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL SPINA BIFIDA AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. DODD (for himself and Mr. WICKER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 661

Whereas spina bifida is the most common, permanently disabling birth defect;

Whereas spina bifida occurs during the first month of pregnancy and leaves a permanent opening in the spinal column that subsequently impacts nearly every organ system;

Whereas an estimated 70,000 to 130,000 people in the United States currently live with spina bifida;

Whereas all women of childbearing age are at risk of having a spina bifida affected pregnancy;

Whereas an estimated 70 percent of neural tube defects such as spina bifida can be prevented if a woman consumes adequate amounts of folic acid, which is found in most over-the-counter multivitamins and foods rich in folate such as spinach, prior to becoming pregnant;

Whereas Hispanic women are at the highest risk, between 1.5 and 2 times higher than non-Hispanic whites, of delivering a baby with spina bifida or another neural tube defect, yet are the least likely to consume sufficient amounts of folic acid prior to becoming pregnant;

Whereas people with spina bifida face unprecedented medical complications associated with aging because people with spina bifida are living longer than people with spina bifida in previous generations lived and care for spina bifida is complex and involves myriad clinical specialists;

Whereas a 2005 nationwide survey of spina bifida clinics revealed that the current system of care serving people with spina bifida does not fully meet current or anticipated needs and physicians have little evidence-based research about spina bifida on which to build neurological, orthopedic, or urologic treatment regimens and interventions;

Whereas the National Spina Bifida Program, administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, exists to improve the health, well being, and overall quality of life for the individuals and families affected by spina bifida through numerous programmatic components, including the National Spina Bifida Patient Registry and critical quality of life research in spina bifida;

Whereas the National Spina Bifida Patient Registry helps to improve the quality of care, to reduce morbidity and mortality from spina bifida, and to increase the efficiency of, and decrease the cost of, care by supporting the collection of longitudinal treatment data, developing quality measures and treatment standards of care and best practices, identifying centers of excellence in spina bifida, evaluating the clinical and cost effectiveness of the treatment of spina bifida, and exchanging evidence-based information among health care providers across the country; and

Whereas October has been designated as "National Spina Bifida Awareness Month" to increase awareness of spina bifida, of ways to prevent spina bifida, and of the need for increased funding to support improving evidence-based research and enhancing the quality of life of those living with spina bifida: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Spina Bifida Awareness Month and of national organizations working for people with spina bifida;

(2) recognizes the importance of—
(A) highlighting the occurrence of spina bifida;

(B) recognizing the struggles and successes of people who live with spina bifida; and
(C) advancing efforts to decrease the incidence of spina bifida;

(3) supports the ongoing development of the National Spina Bifida Patient Registry to improve lives through research and to improve the treatment of spina bifida in both children and adults;

(4) recognizes that there is a continued need for a commitment of resources for efforts to reduce and prevent disabling birth defects like spina bifida; and

(5) commends the work of national organizations that educate, support, and provide hope for individuals who are affected by spina bifida and their families.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 98—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL AIDS STRATEGY

Mrs. CLINTON submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. CON. RES. 98

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that more than 1,000,000 people are currently living with HIV in the United States;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 56,300 individuals were newly infected with HIV in 2006;

Whereas approximately 25 percent of individuals with HIV are unaware that they are infected;

Whereas the estimate by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention utilizes a new methodology that has resulted in more accurate estimates of new infections than the previous methodology;

Whereas previous estimates of HIV infection rates undercounted the rate of infection by 40 percent;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have determined that the leading transmission category of HIV infection is male-to-male sexual contact, followed by heterosexual contact and injection drug use;

Whereas the 2000 United States Census noted that African Americans account for approximately 13 percent of the population of the United States, but in 2006 African Americans accounted for 46 percent of HIV diagnoses;

Whereas, of the estimated 18,849 people under the age of 25 who were diagnosed with HIV between 2001 and 2005, more than 60 percent were African American;

Whereas the rate of AIDS diagnoses for African-American adults and adolescents is 10 times higher than that of their White counterparts and the rate of diagnoses for Black women is nearly 23 times the rate for White women;

Whereas, in 2006, Black women accounted for 61 percent of new HIV infections among women and had an infection rate that was almost 15 times higher than that of White women;

Whereas AIDS is the leading cause of death for Black women between the ages of 25 and 34;

Whereas the Black AIDS Institute notes that there are more African Americans living with HIV in the United States than there are people living with HIV in 7 out of the 15 focus countries served by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention note that socioeconomic issues impact the rates of HIV infection among Blacks, and studies have found an association between higher AIDS incidence and lower incomes;

Whereas, in 2006, Hispanics accounted for 18 percent of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses, but account for approximately 15 percent of the overall population, according to the Bureau of the Census;

Whereas, in 2005, HIV/AIDS was the fourth leading cause of death among Hispanic men and women between the ages of 35 and 44;

Whereas, in 2006, Hispanic women were 5 times more likely to have AIDS than non-Hispanic White women;

Whereas, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation, funding for domestic HIV prevention programs was decreased by more