

S. 1278. A bill to establish the Consumers Choice Health Plan, a public health insurance plan that provides an affordable and accountable health insurance option for consumers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TESTER, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. DORGAN, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1279. A bill to amend the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 to extend the Rural Community Hospital Demonstration Program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CORKER (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. BENNETT):

S. 1280. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to delegate management authority over troubled assets purchased under the Troubled Asset Relief Program, to require the establishment of a trust to manage assets of certain designated TARP recipients, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 1281. A bill to enhance after-school programs in rural areas of the United States by establishing a pilot program to help communities establish and improve rural after-school programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BROWNBACK (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GRAHAM, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOPE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. KYL, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. THUNE, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. VOINOVICH):

S. 1282. A bill to establish a Commission on Congressional Budgetary Accountability and Review of Federal Agencies; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 1283. A bill to require persons that operate Internet websites that sell airline tickets to disclose to the purchaser of each ticket the air carrier that operates each segment of the flight, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 1284. A bill to require the implementation of certain recommendations of the National Transportation Safety Board, to require the establishment of national standards with respect to flight requirements for pilots, to require the development of fatigue management plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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

S. 1285. A bill to provide that certain photographic records relating to the treatment of any individual engaged, captured, or detained after September 11, 2001, by the Armed Forces of the United States in operations outside the United States shall not be subject to disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), to amend section 552(b)(3) of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act) to provide that statutory exemptions to disclosure requirements of that Act shall specifically cite to the provision of that Act authorizing exemptions, to ensure and open and deliberative process in Congress by providing for related legislative proposals to explicitly state such required citations, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. DODD, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. KAUFMAN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BURRIS, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BAUCUS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. INOUE, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. TESTER, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. BENNETT, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. REED, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. Res. 187. A resolution condemning the use of violence against providers of health care services to women; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Res. 188. A resolution congratulating the Los Angeles Lakers for winning the 2009 National Basketball Championship; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 144

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 144, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove cell phones from listed property under section 280F.

S. 151

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 151, a bill to protect Indian arts and crafts through the improvement of applicable criminal proceedings, and for other purposes.

S. 210

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 210, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the credit for employers establishing workplace child care facilities, to increase the child care credit to encourage greater use of quality child care services, to provide incentives for students to earn child care-related degrees and to work in child care facilities, and to increase the exclusion for employer-provided dependent care assistance.

S. 337

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 337, a bill to prohibit the importation of ruminants and swine, and fresh and frozen meat and products of ruminants and swine, from Argentina until the Secretary of Agriculture certifies to Congress that every region of

Argentina is free of foot and mouth disease without vaccination.

S. 384

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. BURRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 384, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2010 through 2014 to provide assistance to foreign countries to promote food security, to stimulate rural economies, and to improve emergency response to food crises, to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, and for other purposes.

S. 546

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 546, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation.

S. 627

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 627, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to support early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs.

S. 801

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 801, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to waive charges for humanitarian care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to family members accompanying veterans severely injured after September 11, 2001, as they receive medical care from the Department and to provide assistance to family caregivers, and for other purposes.

S. 823

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 823, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a 5-year carryback of operating losses, and for other purposes.

S. 841

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 841, a bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to study and establish a motor vehicle safety standard that provides for a means of alerting blind and other pedestrians of motor vehicle operation.

S. 866

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNETT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 866, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 regarding environmental education, and for other purposes.

S. 878

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 878, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to modify provisions relating to beach monitoring, and for other purposes.

S. 883

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. BURRIS), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) were added as cosponsors of S. 883, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition and celebration of the establishment of the Medal of Honor in 1861, America's highest award for valor in action against an enemy force which can be bestowed upon an individual serving in the Armed Services of the United States, to honor the American military men and women who have been recipients of the Medal of Honor, and to promote awareness of what the Medal of Honor represents and how ordinary Americans, through courage, sacrifice, selfless service and patriotism, can challenge fate and change the course of history.

S. 908

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 908, a bill to amend the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 to enhance United States diplomatic efforts with respect to Iran by expanding economic sanctions against Iran.

S. 937

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 937, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to ensure that sewage treatment plants monitor for and report discharges of raw sewage, and for other purposes.

S. 941

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 941, a bill to reform the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, modernize firearm laws and regulations, protect the community from criminals, and for other purposes.

S. 1004

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1004, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare beneficiaries with access to geriatric assessments and chronic care management and coordination services, and for other purposes.

S. 1023

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr.

CONRAD) were added as cosponsors of S. 1023, a bill to establish a non-profit corporation to communicate United States entry policies and otherwise promote leisure, business, and scholarly travel to the United States.

S. 1065

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1065, a bill to authorize State and local governments to direct divestiture from, and prevent investment in, companies with investments of \$20,000,000 or more in Iran's energy sector, and for other purposes.

S. 1066

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1066, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to preserve access to ambulance services under the Medicare program.

S. 1099

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1099, a bill to provide comprehensive solutions for the health care system of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1131

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1131, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide certain high cost Medicare beneficiaries suffering from multiple chronic conditions with access to coordinated, primary care medical services in lower cost treatment settings, such as their residences, under a plan of care developed by a team of qualified and experienced health care professionals.

S. 1135

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1135, a bill to establish a voluntary program in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to encourage consumers to trade-in older vehicles for more fuel efficient vehicles, and for other purposes.

S. 1136

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1136, a bill to establish a chronic care improvement demonstration program for Medicaid beneficiaries with severe mental illnesses.

S. 1183

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1183, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to provide assistance to the Government of Haiti to end within 5 years the deforestation in Haiti and restore within 30 years the extent of tropical forest cover in existence in Haiti in 1990, and for other purposes.

S. 1184

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Mississippi

(Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1184, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to permit employers to pay higher wages to their employees.

S. 1207

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1207, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia, as a unit of the National Park System.

S. 1230

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 1230, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a Federal income tax credit for certain home purchases.

S. 1249

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) were added as cosponsors of S. 1249, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to create a value indexing mechanism for the physician work component of the Medicare physician fee schedule.

S. 1265

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1265, a bill to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to provide members of the Armed Forces and their family members equal access to voter registration assistance, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 17

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 17, a joint resolution approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 11

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 11, a concurrent resolution condemning all forms of anti-Semitism and reaffirming the support of Congress for the mandate of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 25

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 25, a concurrent resolution recognizing the value and benefits that community health centers provide as health care homes for over 18,000,000 individuals, and the importance of enabling health centers and other safety

net providers to continue to offer accessible, affordable, and continuous care to their current patients and to every American who lacks access to preventive and primary care services.

S. CON. RES. 26

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 26, a concurrent resolution apologizing for the enslavement and racial segregation of African Americans.

S. RES. 153

At the request of Mr. KAUFMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 153, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on the restitution of or compensation for property seized during the Nazi and Communist eras.

AMENDMENT NO. 1303

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1303 intended to be proposed to S. 1023, a bill to establish a non-profit corporation to communicate United States entry policies and otherwise promote leisure, business, and scholarly travel to the United States.

AMENDMENT NO. 1311

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1311 intended to be proposed to S. 1023, a bill to establish a non-profit corporation to communicate United States entry policies and otherwise promote leisure, business, and scholarly travel to the United States.

AMENDMENT NO. 1312

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1312 intended to be proposed to S. 1023, a bill to establish a non-profit corporation to communicate United States entry policies and otherwise promote leisure, business, and scholarly travel to the United States.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1278. A bill to establish the Consumers Choice Health Plan, a public health insurance plan that provides an affordable and accountable health insurance option for consumers; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, there is a stark choice looming before Congress. It is the choice between enacting a comprehensive reform bill that truly improves our health care system for the American people or enacting a mediocre reform bill that largely maintains the status quo—which is an ineffective and costly

health care system run by the insurance industry. I know that most of my colleagues want the former—a 21st Century health care system that provides meaningful and affordable coverage for all, improves health outcomes, and brings accountability and responsibility back into health care.

I am absolutely convinced that the inclusion of a strong public health insurance plan option is the only way to guarantee that all consumers have affordable, adequate, and accountable options available in the insurance marketplace. It is for this reason that I rise today with my good friend, Senator SHERROD BROWN of Ohio, to introduce the Consumers Health Care Act of 2009—legislation to provide a strong public plan option in the National Health Insurance Exchange.

One of the most contentious, yet critical, pieces of the national health care reform effort is whether or not Americans should have the option to buy their health insurance from a publicly run organization. In other words, in addition to choosing among numerous health plans run by private insurers, should consumers also have the option of choosing an affordable, stable, and transparent public plan when they are deciding what is best for them and their families? I believe consumers should have the option of choosing a public plan.

Opponents of giving Americans a public option regularly use alarmist rhetoric such as “big government” and “socialized medicine.” And, somehow, protecting the rights of private health insurers to make profits has become more important to some than offering Americans the choice of a plan that seeks to insure everyone, no matter how sick, that is less expensive, and that is responsible to the American people—not to private profit-seeking stockholders.

I’m not sure when the word “public” became such a bad word in the eyes of some of my colleagues. Public means acting in the interest of the general public—which is exactly what we should aspire to in comprehensive health reform.

The private health insurance market has significantly contributed to the broken nature of our health care system, with a long history of cutting coverage off or charging too much for too little. A public plan option—repeat, option—is an effective way to bring competition to the insurance market, hold down costs, and encourage innovation and quality improvements. To deny this option is not only shortsighted, but downright harmful.

Everyone knows the sobering statistics that have highlighted the need for comprehensive health reform. More than 45 million Americans are uninsured and another 25 million are underinsured. Since 1909, the average health insurance premium for a family has increased by 119 percent, from \$5,791 in 1999 to \$12,680 in 2008. Yet, Americans have seen their benefits decrease and

have faced substantially larger out-of-pocket expenses. An estimated 62 percent of all personal bankruptcies involve medical expenses and 78 percent of the individuals who cited medical expenses in their bankruptcy claims had health insurance. Health care costs already consume 17 percent of the United State’s gross domestic product, which everyone can agree is unsustainable.

However, representing the great state of West Virginia has shown me that the need for health reform is far more essential and personal than frightening statistics could ever show. I have listened at roundtable discussions where West Virginians described how the current health care system has failed them. One woman was really struggling to care for both herself and her son. She was uninsured because her son, who had a serious brain disorder, needed 24 hour a day, seven day a week, assistance. Another family wrote to me because their son, who was born with serious congenital heart defects, had reached the \$1 million limit on his mother’s insurance policy within the first nine months of his life. They were unsure of how to obtain lifesaving treatment for their son, now that the insurance company would no longer pay for his care. I have heard from countless other West Virginians who have been unable to find affordable health care, or have figured out too late that the health insurance they had was inadequate for what they needed.

As Congress works to achieve the transformative reform necessary to create a sustainable health care system, a vital component of this reform is the inclusion of a strong public plan option like the Consumer Choice Health Plan included in the Consumers Health Care Act. A public plan will help establish a new insurance framework, one that compels insurers to provide Americans with the best value for their health care at the best price, rather than the current insurance framework, which is focused on avoiding risk and increasing profits. The Consumer Choice Health Plan will be available for all individuals and small businesses, regardless of health status, and will not be concerned with paying a CEO salary or broker commissions.

The Consumers Health Care Act will increase transparency and accountability throughout the health insurance market, as well as give individuals guaranteed access to health care coverage should they be denied or priced out of affordable private insurance coverage. Currently, insurers are allowed to operate in a black box, with little oversight of their coverage and payment decisions. Individuals with pre-existing conditions are routinely denied access to affordable care. For years, United Health was able to underpay providers and overcharge patients for out-of-network services. The Consumers Health Care Act will address this and other issues by bringing greater transparency to the private health insurance market.