

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to increase the number of children eligible for free school meals, with a phased-in transition period.

S. 1740

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1740, a bill to promote the economic security and safety of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and for other purposes.

S. 1761

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1761, a bill to provide an extension of the low-income housing credit placed-in-service date requirement for certain disaster areas.

S. 1861

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1861, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a 2-year extension of the increased rehabilitation credit for structures in the Gulf Opportunity Zone.

S. 1930

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. BURRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1930, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to enhance the administration of, and reduce fraud related to, the first-time homebuyer tax credit, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. 2747. A bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the land and water conservation fund to maximize the effectiveness of the fund for future generations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Land and Water Conservation Authorization and Funding Act of 2009. I am pleased that Senator BAUCUS has joined me as an original cosponsor.

The legislation I am introducing today will provide consistent funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, LWCF, program at a time when its purposes have never been more important to our communities and quality of life. This program provides funding for States and Federal land management agencies for the purchase of land and interests in land from willing sellers. Since its inception in 1964,

LWCF has led to the protection of more than five million acres of land and water across the country, including such irreplaceable landscapes as the Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona, the redwood forests in California, the Rocky Mountain Front in Montana, and Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska.

In my own State of New Mexico, LWCF funds have been used in many important landscapes including the Santa Fe National Forest to provide hundreds of miles of trails for hiking, horseback riding and off-road vehicle use, and to protect the unique Valles Caldera from development. Going forward, the Bureau of Land Management hopes to protect portions of the Rio Grande National Wild and Scenic River in New Mexico using LWCF funds.

Equally important, this program's flexibility means that it also is used to protect what is sometimes most valuable to our communities—the lesser-known special places virtually in our own backyard. The availability of portions of this funding to States means that it can be used to protect local landscapes when development threatens the open spaces that communities need for clean water and recreation. It is also available for the purchase of conservation easements when public ownership of land is not the best solution. These easements—acquired at the request of the landowner—protect the landscape against development while retaining private ownership.

Since its inception in 1964, the law has provided that the Land and Water Conservation Fund will accumulate revenues from Federal outdoor recreation user fees, the Federal motorboat fuel tax, surplus property sales, and from oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf. It has been authorized at \$900 million a year since 1977. In establishing LWCF, Congress recognized the importance of the protection of lands with significant natural, recreation and scenic attributes, and for the development of outdoor recreation lands and facilities at the State and local level.

Under current law these funds cannot be spent until they are further appropriated each year. Congress has rarely appropriated the \$900 million annually that was authorized as necessary as far back as 1977. The levels of funding for both Federal agencies and States have fluctuated wildly over the years. In addition, LWCF itself will expire in 2015 if not reauthorized.

However, the purpose of LWCF—the acquisition of land and interests in land—is one that requires consistency and predictability in order to be truly effective. The opportunity for land purchase can emerge quickly and can be quickly lost. The cost often requires that deals be structured over a period of time. The absence of a consistent amount of funding annually makes it virtually impossible for Federal agencies or States to plan effectively or to ensure that they can protect those

areas most important to communities and to the nation as a whole and at the lowest cost.

Protection of special places and landscapes for the common good has always been a great American idea that we have exported to the rest of the world. These lands are a wonderful gift that every taxpayer receives at birth, and values very highly. Today, even more than when LWCF was enacted, there is increasing pressure on our natural landscapes, both as a result of man-made development and changes in our climate. It is more imperative than ever that we protect and restore our ecosystems so that they stay resilient. By protecting natural systems, we are protecting human health and the economy by providing clean water, clean air, livable coastal areas and the quality of life that is so important to all Americans.

The time has come to make sure that the Land and Water Conservation Fund has consistent and predictable funding and that it continues beyond 2015. This bill will not change the authorized amount or the well-established purposes and parameters of the Fund. It simply provides that the monies deposited in the Fund under current law will be available without further appropriation at the authorized amount. It is my hope that this will be a down payment on something vitally important to all Americans—protection and conservation of our natural heritage and our most special places for ourselves and for future generations.

I would like to thank Senator BAUCUS for his leadership on this issue and I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation in a timely manner.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2747

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Land and Water Conservation Authorization and Funding Act of 2009”.

SEC. 2. PERMANENT AUTHORIZATION; FULL FUNDING.

(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the amendments made by subsection (b) are—

(1) to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the land and water conservation fund established under section 2 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601-5); and

(2) to maximize the effectiveness of the fund for future generations.

(b) AMENDMENTS.—

(1) PERMANENT AUTHORIZATION.—Section 2 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601-5) is amended—

(A) in the matter preceding subsection (a), by striking “During the period ending September 30, 2015, there” and inserting “There”; and

(B) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “through September 30, 2015”.

(2) FULL FUNDING.—Section 3 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601-6) is amended to read as follows: “SEC. 3. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.

“Monies covered into the fund under section 2 shall be available for expenditure to carry out the purposes of this Act, without further appropriation.”.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mrs. LINCOLN, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 2748. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the employer wage credit for employees who are active duty members of the uniformed services; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Small Business and Military Families Assistance Act which provides an extension of a provision included in the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax, HEART, Act of 2008 which passed last Congress. Senator LINCOLN is a cosponsor. The HEART Act has been referred to as the “thank you bill” and that is very appropriate. The purpose of the HEART Act was to provide military families with well deserved tax relief. As we approach Veterans Day, I believe that it is appropriate to extend the tax credit for small employers of reservists called to active duty.

The best definition of patriotism is keeping faith with those who serve our country. That means giving our troops the resources they need to keep them safe while they are protecting us. It means supporting our troops at home as well as abroad.

Currently, there are over 120,000 military personnel serving in Iraq. There are approximately 68,000 U.S. service members in Afghanistan. Many of these men and women are reservists and have been called to active duty, frequently for multiple tours.

Most large businesses have the resources to provide supplemental income to reservist employees called up. I applaud the businesses that have been able to pay supplemental income to their reservists, but it is not easy for small businesses to do the same.

In January 2007, the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship held a hearing on veterans’ small business issues. A majority of our veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are Reserve and National Guard members—35 percent of whom are either self-employed or own or are employed by a small business.

We heard some disturbing statistics about the impact and unintended consequences the call up of reservists is having on small businesses. According to a January 2007 survey conducted by Workforce Management, 54 percent of the businesses surveyed responded that they would not hire a citizen soldier if they knew that they could be called up for an indeterminate amount of time. I am concerned that long call ups and re-deployments have made it hard for small businesses to be supportive of civilian soldiers.

The HEART Act provides a tax credit to small businesses to assist with the

cost of paying the salary of their reservist employees when they are called to active duty. This tax credit provides an incentive for small employers to eliminate any pay gap between civilian and military pay. The provision provides small businesses with less than 50 employees with a tax credit of 20 percent of the differential pay. The maximum credit is \$4,000. The credit is for amounts paid for before January 1, 2010. My legislation would extend this provision for an additional year.

While our reservists are continuing to serve, we should continue to provide assistance. Now is not the time to end this credit which helps small business do the right thing. During these difficult economic times, it is a struggle for small business to pay their employees who are called up a wage differential.

Our service men and women need to know that we are honoring their service. An extension of the small business credit will help our military families with some of their financial burdens. It cannot repay the sacrifices they have made for us, but it is a small way we can support our troops and their families.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 343—TO CONSTITUTE THE MAJORITY PARTY’S MEMBERSHIP ON CERTAIN COMMITTEES FOR THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS, OR UNTIL THEIR SUCCESSORS ARE CHOSEN

Mr. REID submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 343

Resolved, That the following shall constitute the majority party’s membership on the following committee for the One Hundred Eleventh Congress, or until their successors are chosen:

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION: Mr. Schumer (Chairman), Mr. Byrd, Mr. Inouye, Mr. Dodd, Mrs. Feinstein, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Nelson (Nebraska), Mrs. Murray, Mr. Pryor, Mr. Udall (New Mexico), Mr. Warner.

SENATE RESOLUTION 344—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE TRAGIC SHOOTING AT FORT HOOD, TEXAS ON NOVEMBER 5, 2009

Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. REID, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. ALEXANDER Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BAYH, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BOND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. BURR, Mr. BURRIS, Mr. BYRD, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DODD, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mrs.

FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GREGG, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KLOFMAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KOHL, Mr. KYL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEMIEUX, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SPECTER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. VITTER, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WEBB, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 344

Whereas Fort Hood, Texas, the largest military installation in the world, is home to numerous distinguished units of the Armed Forces of the United States, including the Third Corps, the First Cavalry Division, the Third Armored Cavalry Regiment, and others;

Whereas Fort Hood has long been a source of pride for the State of Texas and for all the people of the United States who value the selfless service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform;

Whereas the soldiers, family members, and civilian employees who live and serve at Fort Hood play a critical role in the defense of our Nation;

Whereas the soldiers of Fort Hood have served with honor and distinction in the Global War on Terror, frequently on the front lines in the combat theaters of Iraq and Afghanistan; and

Whereas the Fort Hood community experienced a monumental tragedy on November 5, 2009, when a gunman opened fire on large groups of soldiers on the installation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) offers its deepest and most sincere condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of the innocent victims killed or wounded in the senseless violence that occurred on November 5, 2009;

(2) offers support and hope for a full recovery for those who have been wounded;

(3) honors the heroic service, actions, and sacrifices of law enforcement personnel, first responders, soldiers present on the scene, medical personnel, and countless others who aided the innocent victims of this attack; and

(4) shares in the pain and grief felt by the people of the United States in the aftermath of this tragic event.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2737. Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. BOND) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2730 proposed by Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mrs. HUTCHISON) to the bill H.R. 3082, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.