

employees from 25 to 51. Moreover, the firm recently added 25 additional employees in January of this year to its new location in Pittsfield. This remarkable expansion provides high-quality jobs for Mainers, which is especially vital after the closing of Global Contract Services in Pittsfield, leaving 65 employees without jobs.

With cutting-edge technology, Argo is a leader in call center service and support. The company prides itself on having the best integrated system in the industry that is customized to handle a vast array of clients. Moreover, Argo has always firmly believed that having dedicated professionals as part of the Argo family helps direct the path of any given project. There is a pervading philosophy in the telecommunications, marketing, and customer service industry that retaining a current customer is easier than finding a new one. Indeed, customer care is a top priority, especially for small businesses competing with larger companies with more resources and cheaper products. This quality investment in customer service has been a key component in Argo's success.

Further, Jason understands the importance of an engaged staff and giving back to the local community. He consistently works to increase company morale and provide an atmosphere where people enjoy coming into work every day with a positive attitude. As a dedicated part of the Lewistown-Auburn community, this company also donated to Sand Castle Pre-School in Lewistown which assists disadvantaged youths.

Small businesses drive the American economy by consistently creating jobs in the private sector while spurring investment in their local community. Argo's success and expansion is a glowing example of why these firms are so critical to America's economy. It is innovative entrepreneurs like Jason Levesque who are going to lead us out of our economic morass by creating jobs and opportunity all across our Nation. Despite these difficult economic times, he has clearly fostered a winning strategy, and I congratulate him and everyone at Argo Marketing for their dedication to excellence and for maintaining an impressive record of job creation in central Maine. I offer my best wishes for their future endeavors.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were placed on the Executive Calendar under Privileged Nominations.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:41 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3298. An act to establish the position of Special Assistant for Veterans Affairs in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3309. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 3298. An act to establish the position of Special Assistant for Veterans Affairs in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 3309. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2682. An act to provide end user exemptions from certain provisions of the Commodity Exchange Act and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2779. An act to exempt inter-affiliate swaps from certain regulatory requirements put in place by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

H.R. 4014. An act to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act with respect to information provided to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate announced that on today, March 28, 2012, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 2038. An act to prohibit Members of Congress and employees of Congress from using nonpublic information derived from their official positions for personal benefit, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-5501. A communication from the Vice President of Government Affairs and Cor-

porate Communications, National Railroad Passenger Corporation, Amtrak, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to Amtrak's Executive Level 1 salary for 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5502. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Trawl Gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XB014) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5503. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod for American Fisheries Act Catcher/Processors Using Trawl Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-XB028) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5504. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 630 in the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XB010) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5505. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic; Closure" (RIN0648-XA989) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5506. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Sub-ACL (Annual Catch Limit) Harvested for Management Area 2" (RIN0648-XB001) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5507. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Sub-ACL (Annual Catch Limit) Harvested for Management Area 1B" (RIN0648-XA971) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5508. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Adjustment to 2012 Annual Catch Limits" (RIN0648-BB50) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5509. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries

Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fisheries; Amendment 11; Correction" (RIN0648-AX05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5510. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic" (RIN0648-XB031) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5511. A communication from the Director, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "International Services Surveys: BE-150, Quarterly Survey of Cross-Border Credit, Debit, and Charge Card Transactions" (RIN0691-AA79) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5512. A communication from the Associate Administrator, Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revision to the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System (TDRSS) Rates for Non-U.S. Government Customers" (RIN2700-AD72) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5513. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Claims for Patent and Copyright Infringement" (RIN2700-AD63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5514. A communication from the Under Secretary for Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress: Export and Reexport License Requirements to Temporarily Control Items that Provide at Least a Significant Military or Intelligence Advantage to the United States or for Foreign Policy Reasons"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5515. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XB004) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. KERRY, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 80. A resolution condemning the Government of Iran for its state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

By Mr. KERRY, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 344. A resolution supporting the democratic aspirations of the Nicaraguan people and calling attention to the deterioration of constitutional order in Nicaragua.

By Mr. KERRY, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 356. A resolution expressing support for the people of Tibet.

S. Res. 391. A resolution condemning violence by the Government of Syria against journalists, and expressing the sense of the Senate on freedom of the press in Syria.

S. Res. 395. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate in support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the NATO summit to be held in Chicago, Illinois from May 20 through 21, 2012.

By Mr. KERRY, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 397. A resolution promoting peace and stability in Sudan, and for other purposes.

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. THUNE (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. VITTER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. KYL, Mr. HELLER, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. LEE, Mr. PAUL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BURR, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. TOOMEY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. COBURN, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. DEMINT, and Mr. COATS):

S. 2242. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2243. A bill to establish a program to provide incentive payments to participating Medicare beneficiaries who voluntarily establish and maintain better health; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2244. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assist in the identification of unclaimed and abandoned human remains to determine if any such remains are eligible for burial in a national cemetery, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. HELLER, Mr. VITTER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. WICKER, Mr. RISCH, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COBURN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ENZI, Mr. KYL, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. COATS, Mr. PAUL, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. 2245. A bill to preserve existing rights and responsibilities with respect to waters of

the United States; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 2246. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to provide off-base transition training, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LEE:

S. 2247. A bill to amend the Federal Reserve Act to improve the functioning and transparency of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal Open Market Committee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. LEE):

S. 2248. A bill to clarify that a State has the sole authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on Federal land within the boundaries of the State; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. AKAKA:

S. 2249. A bill to provide for the reform of the Senior Executive Service; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and Mrs. HAGAN):

S. Res. 408. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Day; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. INOUE, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. KOHL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. BROWN of Ohio):

S. Res. 409. A resolution designating April 2012 as "Financial Literacy Month"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. REID, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. Res. 410. A resolution honoring the accomplishments and legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. LEE):

S. 2248. A bill to clarify that a State has the sole authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on Federal land within the boundaries of the State; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I rise to introduce S. 2248, a bill that would clarify the States' sole authority to regulate the process of hydraulic fracturing at the State level as opposed to the Federal level.