

S. 1605, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect public safety officers, judges, witnesses, victims, and their family members, and for other purposes.

S. 1791

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1791, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a deduction for qualified timber gains.

S. 1951

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1951, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to help individuals with functional impairments and their families pay for services and supports that they need to maximize their functionality and independence and have choices about community participation, education, and employment, and for other purposes.

S. 1998

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1998, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to enhance protections relating to the reputation and meaning of the Medal of Honor and other military decorations and awards, and for other purposes.

S. 2008

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2008, a bill to improve cargo security, and for other purposes.

S. 2134

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2134, a bill to strengthen existing programs to assist manufacturing innovation and education, to expand outreach programs for small and medium-sized manufacturers, and for other purposes.

S. 2157

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2157, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for the Purple Heart to be awarded to prisoners of war who die in captivity under circumstances not otherwise establishing eligibility for the Purple Heart.

S. 2253

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2253, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to offer the 181 Area of the Gulf of Mexico for oil and gas leasing.

S. 2287

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr.

ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2287, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase and permanently extend the expensing of certain depreciable business assets for small businesses.

S. 2314

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2314, a bill to suspend the application of any provision of Federal law under which persons are relieved from the requirement to pay royalties for production of oil or natural gas from Federal lands in periods of high oil and natural gas prices, to require the Secretary to seek to renegotiate existing oil and natural gas leases to similarly limit suspension of royalty obligations under such leases, and for other purposes.

S. 2322

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2322, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to make the provision of technical services for medical imaging examinations and radiation therapy treatments safer, more accurate, and less costly.

S. 2327

At the request of Mr. ALLEN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2327, a bill to require the FCC to issue a final order regarding white spaces.

S. 2333

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2333, a bill to require an investigation under the Defense Production Act of 1950 of the acquisition by Dubai Ports World of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 79

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 79, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that no United States assistance should be provided directly to the Palestinian Authority if any representative political party holding a majority of parliamentary seats within the Palestinian Authority maintains a position calling for the destruction of Israel.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. PRYOR:

S. 2343. A bill to authorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide relief to the victims of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita by placing manufactured homes in flood plains, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, this week marks the 6-month anniversary of when Hurricane Katrina ravaged the

gulf coast, destroying lives and dreams along the way. Thousands upon thousands of homes were also ruined, and today they remain simply a heap of debris.

I saw this devastation firsthand a few weeks ago when, as a member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, we traveled to Gulfport and New Orleans for field hearings to see what resources are necessary to help the region recover from the largest natural disaster in our history.

In fact, this photograph was taken by one of the press people who was on that trip. So we saw this scene firsthand. Alison Vekshin of Stephens Media took this photo.

I remind my colleagues that Hurricane Katrina completely destroyed 205,330 homes in Louisiana. It completely destroyed 68,729 homes in Mississippi. And 363 homes were completely destroyed in Alabama. For many of these families who lost everything, a place to live would offer opportunity for them to go back to work and begin rebuilding their lives.

I was told by local and State leaders that housing is the catalyst to get businesses open, to get people back to work, to pump money back into the local economy, and to restore the infrastructure that once existed.

Many people along the gulf coast who lost their houses have also lost hope. In Arkansas, we have a place called Hope where 10,777 manufactured homes sit on an airfield.

These homes—ordered by FEMA and paid for by FEMA—now sit in a FEMA-leased site, only to be restricted from use in the gulf region because of a FEMA-imposed rule that prevents them from being located in a floodplain.

FEMA is now accepting bids to gravel the area where the homes are sitting on dirt, costing taxpayers another \$4 to \$7 million. In addition, FEMA is buying a specially designed jack for each corner of each home to prevent sagging and further damage.

These manufactured homes epitomize FEMA's ineptitude in planning, communication, and response. Taxpayers have now spent an estimated \$475 million for these homes to sit gridlocked in bureaucracy, even as evacuees are evicted from hotel rooms and thousands of others struggle to find affordable housing.

Congressman MIKE ROSS of Arkansas asked FEMA to waive the floodplain restriction that stands in the way between the homeless and a home. But FEMA refused, citing that manufactured homes are "sitting ducks" for the next natural disaster. These homes, I have to remind my colleagues, were built to high wind zone 3 specifications, so while they may not withstand the next hurricane—although they may—they will not tumble over during a storm.

Now, we are telling FEMA to let hope travel to where it is needed most, from

Arkansas to Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama.

My legislation, the Hope Housing Act of 2006, allows manufactured homes bought for Katrina and Rita victims to be located in floodplains, protects FEMA from responsibility if the homes are subsequently flooded, and directs FEMA to publicize this change so people will know they are available.

This is a one-time change that I believe is necessary in the face of what I hope will be a one-time disaster. We have people without homes and homes without people. Let's allow the homes to go where they are needed so the people in New Orleans and the gulf coast can return to their communities and help rebuild them. The alternative seems to be to let them sit and deteriorate in Hope, Arkansas.

Mr. President, 6 months is too long to allow this nonsense to continue. I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense solution that allows hurricane victims a little hope and opportunity for their future.

The bottom line is that basically FEMA ordered these homes, paid for these homes, and now they are storing these homes, but their own regulation will not allow them to use them where they are most needed. So what our legislation does is allow FEMA to put these homes down where they are needed to try to get the economic cycle in New Orleans and the gulf coast area going again because right now the cycle is broken. They do not have people down there to work the jobs. They do not have people down there to be consumers. And the reason they do not have people is because they do not have a place to live.

So I urge my colleagues to consider helping in this effort. The Hope Housing Act of 2006 is a very commonsense solution for this very critical need.

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

S. 2345. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt passenger vehicles eligible for the alternative motor vehicle credit and the credit for qualified electric vehicles from the limitation on depreciation for luxury automobiles; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of a bill I introduced today that may be cited as the "America's Business Choice Act" 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. 2345

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 "America's Business Choice Act".

SEC. 2. EXCEPTION FROM DEPRECIATION LIMITATION FOR CERTAIN ALTERNATIVE AND ELECTRIC PASSENGER AUTOMOBILES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 280F(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986

(relating to limitation) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(D) SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN ALTERNATIVE MOTOR VEHICLES AND QUALIFIED ELECTRIC VEHICLES.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to any motor vehicle for which a credit is allowable under section 30 or 30B."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subparagraph (C) of section 280F(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking clause (ii) and by redesignating clause (iii) as clause (ii).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to property placed in service after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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

S. 2347. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the tax credit for holders of qualified zone academy bonds; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today, I am reintroducing, with Senator ROCKEFELLER, a bill to make some small but important changes to the Qualified Zone Academy Bond, QZAB, program.

The QZAB program helps qualifying schools renovate and update school buildings. Schools issue special bonds to finance the cost of renovation. Purchasers of the bonds receive a Federal tax credit in lieu of interest on the bond, thus helping to reduce the cost to the school. Most States are now using this program to modernize their school facilities. The QZAB program expired in 2005, but the Tax Reconciliation bill that will soon be considered by a conference committee extends the program.

We are proposing to make modest changes in the QZAB program to make it even more useful to schools across the country. Our bill would expand the pool of bond purchasers to include all taxpayers, both individuals and other entities. Currently, only financial institutions can buy QZABs, which precludes pension funds and mutual funds from purchasing QZABs.

Our bill would also allow QZABs to be "stripped" so the purchaser could then sell separately the principal portion of the bond and the tax credit. This will encourage the development of a secondary market for the bonds and reduce the discount costs making more of the proceeds available for school-related expenses. It will also open the market to nonprofit entities such as public employee pension funds.

The bill revises the allocation formula to the States to better align with Title I, the program for disadvantaged students. Current law requires that allocations be made on the basis of a State's population living below poverty. This change simplifies and updates by tying funding to the formula used to distribute Title I funding for disadvantaged students.

Unused bonding authority would be reallocated to other States. A few States have not used their allocations, and their bonding authority has lapsed. However, the demand in many States now far exceeds their allocation. Al-

lowing funds to be reallocated would maximize the potential of the QZAB program.

Finally, our bill would allow QZABs to be used for new construction and to purchase land for school buildings. We believe QZABs have been proven to be a cost-effective method for financing school renovation. With this additional flexibility, States can effectively reduce their construction backlogs.

School districts across the country have praised the QZAB program for helping them to address serious problems in their buildings. This is a good program. We can make it even better by enacting these small reforms. I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this important measure.

By Mr. OBAMA (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2348. A bill to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to require a licensee to notify the Atomic Energy Commission, and the State and county in which a facility is located, whenever there is an unplanned release of fission products in excess of allowable limits; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, less than 2 months ago, it was announced by Exelon Nuclear that an environmental monitoring program discovered higher than normal concentrations of tritium in the groundwater near the Nuclear Generating Station in Braidwood, IL.

Indications are that this tritium plume is the result of an accidental radioactive wastewater release that occurred approximately 6 to 8 years ago, and now the tritiated water has migrated underground into several drinking wells of nearby residents.

While most of the issues associated with this situation are still under investigation, one issue is clear. Community residents, particularly the State and local officials responsible for the safety and health of their constituents, did not receive full or immediate notification of this contamination—either from Exelon, or the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, NRC, the Federal agency with oversight over nuclear plant operations.

I was surprised to learn, that while Federal law requires State and local officials to be notified immediately upon a "declared emergency," Federal law does not require State and local officials to be notified of any other accidental, unplanned, or unintentional radioactive substance releases that may occur if those releases do not immediately rise to a public health or safety threat. And while those incidents must be documented with the NRC and made available to the public, accessing that information is contingent upon the public and State and local officials actually knowing that these incidents ever occurred.

When radioactive substances are released into the environment outside of normal operating procedures, notifying State and local officials should not be a courtesy; it should be the law.

That's why today I am introducing the Nuclear Release Notice Act of 2006, a bill designed to expand the public's right to know when radioactive substances are released from a reactor. Specifically, the bill is designed to accomplish the following: (1) to ensure that the licensees notify State and local officials at the same time the NRC is notified regarding unplanned incidents that occur at local nuclear power plants; (2) to add State and local reporting requirements not just on incidents regarding fissionable material releases, but on all unplanned radioactive substance releases that are outside of normal operating limits; (3) to add State and local reporting requirements when releases exceed not just NRC limits for normal operation, but also when they exceed other Federal limits and standards for groundwater and other types of contamination; (4) to ensure than any repeat unplanned releases of radioactive substances—even if within allowable limits—that occur more than twice within 2 years are reported to State, local and NRC officials—so that we all know when poor maintenance, malfunctions of poor design are going unfixed; and (5) to provide that violations of this provision could result in the revocation of the operating license of the licensee.

As energy demand throughout the Nation increases in the coming decades, we will be challenged in how best to meet these consumption demands without sacrificing the environment. That means using all of our energy resources fully and wisely, including wind, solar, and other important renewable power-generating resources.

Moreover, as Congress considers policies to address air quality and the deleterious effects of carbon emissions on the global ecosystem, it is reasonable—and realistic—for nuclear power to remain on the table for consideration. Illinois has 11 nuclear power plants—the most of any State in the country—and nuclear power provides more than half of Illinois' electricity needs.

The people of Illinois—and all residents who live near nuclear power plants—have a right to know when actions are taken that might affect their safety and well-being. This bill furthers this commonsense goal, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. DAYTON):

S. 2351. A bill to provide additional funding for mental health care for veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce legislation today to double the funding for veterans mental health care over the next 5 years.

Our brave veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan have faced unspeakable horrors. They have seen people killed and wounded, experienced the stress of urban warfare, and endured other traumatic events. These experiences undoubtedly take their

toll. However, it can take months or even years for these events to impact a person's mental health.

The need for this legislation is clear. Just today, the Washington Post reported that more than one in three soldiers and Marines who have served in Iraq later sought help for mental health problems. And we already know that the Veterans' Administration treated almost 19,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans for post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, between 2002 and 2005. These numbers will continue to increase.

This legislation will help ensure that the VA has the resources necessary to treat veterans with mental illness. First, it authorizes the VA to spend at least \$3.6 billion in 2007—up from \$2.8 billion in 2006—and increases funding to \$5.6 billion by 2011. Second, it requires an annual report about progress in implementing milestones from the VA Mental Health Strategic Plan.

This bill is supported by AMVETS and Disabled American Veterans.

It is imperative that we make a long-term commitment to provide mental health services to our veterans, who have sacrificed so much for us. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 386— HONORING THE PRE-NEGRO LEAGUES AND NEGRO LEAGUES BASEBALL PLAYERS AND EXECUTIVES ELECTED TO THE NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2006

Mr. TALENT (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRIST, and Mr. SUNUNU) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 386

Whereas African Americans began to play baseball in the late 1800s on military teams, college teams, and company teams, and eventually found their way onto professional teams with White players;

Whereas the racism and "Jim Crow" laws that forced African American players from their integrated teams by 1900 compelled those dedicated players to form their own "barnstorming" teams that traveled throughout the United States and offered to play any team willing to challenge them;

Whereas, in 1920, the Negro National League was created under the guidance of Andrew "Rube" Foster, a former player, manager, and owner of the Chicago American Giants, at a meeting held at the Paseo YMCA in Kansas City, Missouri;

Whereas soon after the Negro National League was formed, rival leagues were assembled in eastern and southern States, bringing the thrills and innovative play of African American ballplayers to major urban centers and rural countryside throughout the United States, Canada, and Latin America;

Whereas, from the 1920s to the 1960s, over 30 communities located throughout the United States were home to teams in 1 of the 6 Negro Leagues;

Whereas the Negro Leagues maintained a high level of professional skill and became

centerpieces for economic development in their communities;

Whereas, in 1945, the Brooklyn Dodgers of Major League Baseball recruited Jackie Robinson from the Kansas City Monarchs, making Robinson the first African American in the modern era to play on a Major League Baseball roster;

Whereas the integration of Major League Baseball, which soon followed the signing of Jackie Robinson, prompted the decline of the Negro Leagues because the Major Leagues began to recruit and sign the best African American ballplayers;

Whereas it has been recognized by numerous baseball authorities that many of the greatest players ever to play the game of baseball played in the Negro Leagues, rather than Major League Baseball;

Whereas, on February 27, 2006, the National Baseball Hall of Fame announced that Ray Brown, Willard Brown, Andy Cooper, Frank Grant, Pete Hill, Biz Mackey, Effa Manley, Joe Mendez, Alex Pompez, Cum Posey, Louis Santop, Mule Suttles, Ben Taylor, Cristobal Torriente, Sol White, J.L. Wilkinson, and Jud Wilson had been elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame Class of 2006;

Whereas less than 1 percent of all professional baseball players have been honored with induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas we congratulate Ray Brown, an ace starter for the Homestead Grays who—

(1) ranks among the top Negro Leagues pitchers in total wins and winning percentage; and

(2) pitched a perfect game in 1945 as well as a one-hitter in the 1944 Negro World Series;

Whereas we congratulate Willard Brown, an outfielder with the Kansas City Monarchs who—

(1) lead the Negro American League in home runs and batting average during numerous seasons; and

(2) was considered by many to be the Negro American League version of Josh Gibson;

Whereas we congratulate Andy Cooper, a pitcher with the Detroit Stars and Kansas City Monarchs who—

(1) had a knack for changing the speed of his pitches;

(2) was the all-time leader in every Detroit Stars pitching category;

(3) was among the top 10 leaders in career wins, strikeouts, shutouts, and winning percentage in Negro Leagues history; and

(4) later in his career became the manager of the Kansas City Monarchs and lead them to 3 pennants;

Whereas we congratulate Frank Grant, a second baseman with tremendous range and a strong arm who—

(1) hit over .300 in 4 seasons with White minor league teams until the color lines forced him out of the league in 1886;

(2) played for top-rated African American teams until 1903; and

(3) who displayed a unique blend of speed and power in the International League that allowed him to turn 1 out of every 4 base hits into extra bases;

Whereas we congratulate Pete Hill, a premier outfielder who—

(1) played brilliantly for the Cuban X-Giants, Philadelphia Giants, Chicago Leland Giants, and the Chicago American Giants before the formation of the Negro Leagues;

(2) during his 1911 season as an American Giant, hit safely in 115 out of 116 games; and

(3) was rated the fourth best outfielder in the renowned 1952 Pittsburgh Courier player-voted poll of the best players of the Negro Leagues;

Whereas we congratulate Biz Mackey, a strong-armed catcher who—

(1) ended his career with a lifetime batting average well over .300;