

This process is not only arbitrary, it is unfair. Taking away a Constitutional right is a serious action and veterans should be afforded due process under the law. At the very least we should expect such decisions to be made by a competent judicial authority and not by civilian government employees.

The current process is also a double standard. Only VA beneficiaries fall under these guidelines. The Social Security Administration assigns fiduciaries to help beneficiaries, yet it does not send their names to the NICS.

Why are we singling out those who fought for this country and those who sacrificed while their spouse or parent served?

My legislation would end this arbitrary and unfair practice that strips the finest men and women of this country of their right to bear arms. This legislation would require a judicial authority to determine that an individual is a danger to themselves or others before their 2nd Amendment rights are taken away.

I am not here to ask that we put guns in the hands of dangerous people. I am here to ask that we treat our veterans fairly and that we take their rights seriously. Many of our veterans' organizations and other groups agree.

The Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act has the support of the The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, AMVETS, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Rifle Association, and Gun Owners of America.

No matter where my colleagues fall on the gun issue, I hope we can all agree that we need a process that is consistent and fair. Our veterans took an oath to uphold the Constitution. They deserve to enjoy the rights they fought so hard to protect.

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 placed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 669

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 "Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act".

SEC. 2. CONDITIONS FOR TREATMENT OF CERTAIN PERSONS AS ADJUDICATED MENTALLY INCOMPETENT FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 55 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§511. Conditions for treatment of certain persons as adjudicated mentally incompetent for certain purposes

“In any case arising out of the administration by the Secretary of laws and benefits under this title, a person who is mentally incapacitated, deemed mentally incompetent, or experiencing an extended loss of consciousness shall not be considered adjudicated as a mental defective under subsection (d)(4) or (g)(4) of section 922 of title 18

without the order or finding of a judge, magistrate, or other judicial authority of competent jurisdiction that such person is a danger to himself or herself or others.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 55 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“511. Conditions for treatment of certain persons as adjudicated mentally incompetent for certain purposes.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 81—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF WORLD WATER DAY

Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KERRY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 81

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly, by resolution, has designated March 22 of each year as “World Water Day”;

Whereas a person needs 4 to 5 liters of water per day to survive;

Whereas a person can live weeks without food, but only days without water;

Whereas every 15 seconds a child dies from a water-borne disease;

Whereas, for children under age 5, water-borne diseases are the leading cause of death;

Whereas millions of women and children already spend several hours a day collecting water from distant, often polluted sources;

Whereas every dollar spent on water and sanitation saves an average of \$9 in costs averted and productivity gained;

Whereas, at any given time, ½ of the hospital beds in the world are occupied by patients suffering from a water-borne disease;

Whereas 88 percent of all diseases are caused by unsafe drinking water, inadequate sanitation, and poor hygiene;

Whereas 1,100,000,000 (1 in 6) people lack access to an improved water supply;

Whereas 2,600,000,000 people in the world lack access to improved sanitation;

Whereas the 263 transboundary lake and river basins in the world are part of the territory of 145 countries and cover nearly ½ of the land surface of the Earth;

Whereas climate change may cause more extreme floods and droughts, increasing political tension and the potential for clashes over transboundary fresh water resources;

Whereas the global celebration of World Water Day is an initiative that grew out of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro;

Whereas the participants in the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, including the United States, agreed to the Plan of Implementation which included an agreement to work to reduce by ½ from the baseline year 1990 “the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water”, “and the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation” by 2015; and

Whereas Congress passed and the President signed into law the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-121), which was intended to “elevate the role of water and sanitation policy in the development of U.S. foreign policy and improve the effectiveness of U.S. official programs”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of World Water Day;

(2) urges an increased effort and the investment of greater resources by the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, and all relevant Federal departments and agencies toward providing sustainable and equitable access to safe drinking water and sanitation for the poor and the very poor; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe the week of World Water Day with appropriate activities that promote awareness of the importance of—

(A) access to clean water; and

(B) cooperation between stakeholders in transboundary water management.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to submit a resolution supporting the ideals and goals of World Water Day. I am pleased to have my colleague Senator JOHN KERRY joining me as the cosponsor of this resolution.

March 22 was established as World Water Day by the United Nations General Assembly to promote awareness of the importance of access to clean water and improved sanitation. More than one billion people lack access to an improved water supply and 2.6 billion people lack access to improved sanitation.

This year's theme, “Shared Water—Shared Opportunities,” highlights opportunities to build trust among countries as they manage their common water resources in ways that promote sustainable economic growth. In the U.S. half of the States border shared waters, and there are growing pressures on the environmental quality and use of these waters.

To recognize World Water Day, activities are planned internationally and here in the U.S. Many cities are sponsoring World Water Day benefit walks, runs and musical celebrations. I urge citizens to participate in these activities and recognize this important day.

In 2000, the United Nations adopted a goal to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015. We have made some progress toward that goal, but more needs to be done. Each day millions of women and girls still spend hours traveling miles to transport water to their homes. In many cases, the source is polluted, leading to disease for them and other members of their families.

The Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005 provided for U.S. assistance in developing countries to provide equal and affordable access to clean and safe water and sanitation. This access is important to U.S. foreign policy interests, and, more important, is a basic human right.

SENATE RESOLUTION 82—RECOGNIZING THE 188TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING GREEK AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr.

WHITEHOUSE, Mr. REED, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. FEINGOLD, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. DODD, Mr. GREGG, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. CARPER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KOHL, Mr. RISCH, Mr. INOUE, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. NELSON of Florida, and Mr. JOHNSON) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 82

Whereas the ancient Greeks developed the concept of democracy, in which the supreme power to govern was vested in the people;

Whereas the Founding Fathers of the United States, many of whom read Greek political philosophy in the original Greek, drew heavily on the political experience and philosophy of ancient Greece in forming our representative democracy;

Whereas Greek Commander in Chief Petros Mavromichalis, a founder of the modern Greek state, said to the citizens of the United States in 1821 that "it is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode and . . . in imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you";

Whereas the Greek national anthem, the "Hymn to Liberty", includes the words, "Most heartily was gladdened George Washington's brave land";

Whereas the people of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance to the Greek people during their struggle for independence;

Whereas Greece played a major role in the World War II struggle to protect freedom and democracy through such bravery as was shown in the historic Battle of Crete, which provided the Axis land war with its first major setback, setting off a chain of events that significantly affected the outcome of World War II;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of Greek civilians were killed in Greece during World War II in defense of the values of the Allies;

Whereas, throughout the 20th century, Greece was one of a few countries that allied with the United States in every major international conflict;

Whereas Greece is a strategic partner and ally of the United States in bringing political stability and economic development to the volatile Balkan region, having invested more than \$20,000,000,000 in the countries of the region, thereby helping to create more than 200,000 new jobs, and having contributed more than \$750,000,000 in development aid for the region;

Whereas Greece actively participates in peacekeeping and peace-building operations conducted by international organizations including the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe;

Whereas Greece received worldwide praise for its extraordinary handling during the 2004 Olympic Games of more than 14,000 athletes and more than 2,000,000 spectators and journalists, a feat Greece handled efficiently, securely, and with hospitality;

Whereas Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism, maintains excellent relations with Muslim nations and Israel;

Whereas the Government of Greece has taken important steps in recent years in furthering cross-cultural understanding and rapprochement with Turkey, as seen with

the January 2008 visit to Turkey by the Prime Minister of Greece, Kostas Karamanlis, the first official visit by a Greek Prime Minister in 49 years;

Whereas Greece and the United States are at the forefront of the effort for freedom, democracy, peace, stability, and human rights;

Whereas those and similar ideals have forged a close bond between Greece and the United States; and

Whereas it is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate March 25, 2009, Greek Independence Day, with the Greek people and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which these two great nations were born: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) extends warm congratulations and best wishes to the people of Greece as they celebrate the 188th anniversary of the independence of Greece;

(2) expresses support for the principles of democratic governance to which the people of Greece are committed; and

(3) notes the important role that Greece has played in the wider European region and in the community of nations since gaining its independence 188 years ago.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 12—RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE SIGNING BY PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN OF THE LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COLLEGIATE PROGRAMS AT GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY

Mr. BROWN submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. CON. RES. 12

Whereas in 2009, the United States honored the 200th anniversary of the birth of President Abraham Lincoln;

Whereas on July 4, 1861, President Lincoln stated in a message to Congress that a principal aim of the United States government should be "to elevate the condition of men—to lift artificial weights from all shoulders—to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all—to afford all, an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life";

Whereas on April 8, 1864, President Lincoln signed into law the legislation (Act of April 8, 1864, ch. 52, 13 Stat. 45) authorizing the conferring of collegiate degrees by the Columbia Institution for Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind, which is now called Gallaudet University;

Whereas that law led for the first time in history to higher education for deaf students in an environment designed to meet their communication needs;

Whereas Gallaudet University was the first, and is still the only, institution in the world that focuses on educational programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing students from the pre-school through the doctoral level;

Whereas Gallaudet University has been a world leader in the fields of education and research for more than a century; and

Whereas since 1869, graduates of Gallaudet University have pursued distinguished careers of leadership in the United States and throughout the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) congratulates and honors Gallaudet University on the 145th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's signing of the legislation authorizing the establishment of collegiate programs at Gallaudet University; and

(2) congratulates Gallaudet University for 145 years of unique and exceptional service to the deaf people of the United States and the world deaf community.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Samantha Harvell, a fellow in Senator BINGAMAN's office, be granted the privilege of the floor during the pendency of H.R. 1388.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING THE COLUMBUS CREW FOR WINNING THE 2008 MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER CUP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration, and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 61.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 61) commending the Columbus Crew Major League Soccer Team for winning the 2008 Major League Soccer Cup.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 61) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 61

Whereas, on Sunday, November 23, 2008, the Columbus Crew defeated the New York Red Bulls by a score of 3-1 to win the 2008 Major League Soccer (MLS) Cup;

Whereas the Columbus Crew led the league with a record of 17 wins, 7 losses, and 6 draws and scored 50 regular season goals and 8 playoff goals;

Whereas Columbus Crew head coach Sigi Schmid was named the 2008 MLS Coach of the Year and became the first MLS Coach to win an MLS Cup with two different teams;

Whereas Columbus Crew forward Guillermo Barros Schelotto was named the 2008 MLS Most Valuable Player and led the league with 19 regular season assists and 6 playoff assists;

Whereas Columbus Crew defender Chad Marshall was named the 2008 MLS Defender of the Year;

Whereas Columbus Crew forward Alejandro Moreno led the team in scoring with 9 regular season goals and 1 playoff goal;

Whereas Columbus Crew goalkeeper Will Hesmer had 17 wins, 97 saves, and 10 shutouts in 29 regular season games;

Whereas Alejandro Moreno, Chad Marshall, and Frankie Hejduk all scored goals in the MLS Cup Championship game;

Whereas the Columbus Crew was the winner of the 2008 MLS Supporters' Shield for being the team with the best regular season record;