

WASP, secured my committee's approval and passed the Senate unanimously on May 20, 2009.

This bill, authored by Senators HUTCHISON and MIKULSKI, recognizes the brave actions of more than a thousand women who served our country so courageously during World War II. Their patriotism and sacrifice were essential to our war effort. Quite simply, they were responsible for transporting critical military aircraft throughout the United States. Ferrying over 12,000 aircraft, of nearly 80 different types, these groundbreaking women operated war machines, from the fabled B-29 Superfortress to the lethal P-51 Mustang fighter. The purpose of their missions was to prepare these aircraft for combat and ensure their readiness.

The WASPs were so effective that they logged over 50 percent of these kinds of missions for our Nation, flying more than 60 million miles over the course of the war. Their likes included Jacqueline Cochran, one of the greatest female pilots of all time, who was chosen to be the director of the WASPs flight training. Jacqueline set the women's U.S. high altitude and international speed records and was also the winner of the coveted Bendix trophy in 1938. During the famous air race, she earned an epic victory flying from Los Angeles to Cleveland in just over 8 hours. Jacqueline was further commended for her service during the war when she was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the highest decoration she could have received from the military without being recognized as an Active-Duty servicemember. When the war ended, Jacqueline's passion for flying would drive her to set new aviation records, becoming the first female pilot to fly a bomber across the Atlantic. Additionally, six WASPs are still living in my home State of Connecticut. One of them, Gloria Heath, flew a dangerous mission as a B-26 bomber pilot, flying at 6,000 feet while towing a banner that fighter pilots would use for target practice during live fire exercises. Now Gloria is nationally recognized as a leader in aviation safety, having served as a founding board member of the Flight Safety Foundation. She also established an international safety information dissemination service to provide a unified, global response to emergencies on the land, in the air, and on the sea. Her pioneering efforts to ensure the safety of pilots and travelers all over the world have undoubtedly saved lives. Throughout her endeavors, Gloria never lost sight of her lifelong commitment to flying. She would become the director of summer aviation programs at Connecticut College, helping young students discover their passion for flight, just as she did half a decade before.

But these women did more than just serve our country they were also pioneers for women's rights. They will forever have the honor of being the first female aviators in American military

history, serving as the forerunners to women's equality in the Armed Forces. In doing so, they paved the way for women's rights in the military and other workforces across the country. And although much still remains to be done to eradicate gender discrimination, women military combat pilots are now flying alongside their brothers in arms a true testament to the barriers broken down by the WASPs more than six decades ago.

These women often faced scorn and ridicule, but they refused to back down in their conviction that they could fly as proficiently as men. Ultimately, they were proven right and demonstrated that success should be measured in terms of merit and talent, not by gender.

Therefore it is with great pride and honor, Mr. President, that I support this bill. I commend Senators HUTCHISON and MIKULSKI for all their hard work and join them in their gratitude for the pioneering women of the WASP program.

INSPECTORS GENERAL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, intend to object to the proceeding to H.R. 885, the Improved Financial and Commodity Markets Oversight and Accountability Act, and a similar Senate bill, S. 1354, dated July 29, 2009, for the following reasons."

I object to provisions regarding inspectors general in H.R. 885, and a similar Senate bill, S. 1354, based on my reading of the language in the Improved Financial and Commodity Markets Oversight and Accountability Act. The act is intended to require Presidential appointments and Senate confirmation for the following five inspectors general: Commodity Futures Trading Commission, CFTC; the National Credit Union Administration, NCUA; the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, PBGC; the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, FRB; and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

In essence, the act will change dramatically the historical and longstanding classification of these five organizations from "designated federal entities" DFE, under the original Inspector General Act of 1978, to Presidential appointees.

These IGs, who are all nonpartisan civil servants, oppose H.R. 885. I have come to agree with their conclusion that the act will neither improve the independence of the five IGs nor enhance their accountability to the American people. Requiring that these five IGs be made Presidential appointees introduces the potential for partisan politics where none currently exists. This is especially true because we have an administration that is not even a year old and three IGs have already been dismissed. I have not yet seen a consistent policy reason articulated for treating these five IGs dif-

ferently from other DFE IGs. If Congress wants to increase the independence and accountability of all inspectors general, there are numerous, more effective ways of doing so, and I would be eager to work toward that common goal. However, this legislation has not had a full and, complete hearing in the Senate, targets only five of the DFE inspectors general for reasons that are unclear, and does not appear to achieve its stated purpose.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I thank Senator KYL and Senator LEVIN for working out a second-degree amendment last week to Senator KYL's earlier amendment, No. 1760, to the National Defense Authorization Act relating to the post-START agreement that the United States is negotiating with the Russian Federation. In my view, the earlier amendment—and section 1239 of the House version of the NDAA, on which that amendment was based—would have undermined the constitutional role of the Senate as the body that considers treaties, as well as the President's role in negotiating treaties. The Senate decided wisely not to adopt the House approach of trying to bar U.S. compliance with a treaty before the treaty has even been negotiated. The substitute amendment we adopted last week was a good result.

The bill approved by the Senate, as amended by Senator KYL's modified amendment, would require the President to report to the Congress on his plan to enhance the safety, security and reliability of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile, to modernize the nuclear weapons complex, and to maintain the delivery platforms. I would encourage the administration to see that requirement not as a burden, but as an opportunity. If U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty is to be approved by the Senate, Members will have to be convinced that the executive branch is prepared to sustain our nuclear deterrence by maintaining a stockpile of safe, secure, and reliable nuclear weapons, without resorting to nuclear testing. This report requirement underscores that concern and the need to address it forthrightly.

I believe that this administration has the will to maintain our nuclear stockpile, and the successes of stockpile stewardship over the last decade have been greater than even its proponents predicted when we last considered CTBT. The report required by this amendment would offer an opportunity to explain to the Senate how far we have come, where we are going next, and how we will fund stockpile stewardship to ensure that we will sustain our deterrent posture even as the United States works with other countries to reduce the numbers and importance of these weapons worldwide. It may be only a preliminary report, if