

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 17

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 17, a bill to repeal the job-killing tax on medical devices to ensure continued access to life-saving medical devices for patients and maintain the standing of United States as the world leader in medical device innovation.

S. 18

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB) were added as cosponsors of S. 18, a bill to repeal the expansion of information reporting requirements for payments of \$600 or more to corporations and for other purposes.

S. 21

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 21, a bill to secure the United States against cyber attack, to enhance American competitiveness and create jobs in the information technology industry, and to protect the identities and sensitive information of American citizens and businesses.

S. 23

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 23, a bill to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for patent reform.

S. 72

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 72, a bill to repeal the expansion of information reporting requirements for payments of \$600 or more to corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 102

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 102, a bill to provide an optional fast-track procedure the President may use when submitting rescission requests, and for other purposes.

S. 164

At the request of Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 164, a bill to repeal the imposition of withholding on certain payments made to vendors by government entities.

S. 168

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 168, a bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to establish standards for the distribution of voter registration application forms and to require organizations to register with

the State prior to the distribution of such forms.

S. 183

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 183, a bill to clarify the applicability of certain maritime laws with respect to the blowout and explosion of the mobile offshore drilling unit Deepwater Horizon.

S. RES. 21

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 21, a resolution to amend the Standing Rules of the Senate to provide procedures for extended debate.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. KOHL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 216. A bill to increase criminal penalties for certain knowing and intentional violations relating to food that is misbranded or adulterated; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, I am pleased to introduce legislation to hold criminals who poison our food supply accountable for their crimes. This is an issue that received considerable attention last year, and I was pleased that the Congress finally passed comprehensive food safety reforms. But our work is not done. The Food Safety Accountability Act increases the sentences that prosecutors can seek for people who violate our food safety laws in those cases where there is conscious or reckless disregard of a risk of death or serious bodily injury. The legislation I propose will allow law enforcement to seek sentences of up to 10 years in jail for those who contaminate our food supply with the intent to mislead or defraud consumers, and endanger Americans.

Last year, I introduced similar legislation which received unanimous support from the Senate Judiciary Committee. I hope the Judiciary Committee, and the full Senate, will give it the same consideration this year. I'd like to thank Senator KLOBUCHAR and Senator FRANKEN for their ongoing support of the bill. Senator SESSIONS, Senator HATCH, Senator COBURN, and Senator GRASSLEY had concerns about its breadth, and we were able to work together to address these concerns in the legislation I introduce today.

Just last summer, a salmonella outbreak caused hundreds of people to fall ill and triggered a national egg recall.

The company responsible for the eggs at the root of this summer's salmonella crisis had a long history of environmental, immigration, labor, and food safety violations. It is clear that fines are not enough to protect the public and effectively deter this unacceptable conduct. We need to make sure that those who intentionally poison the food supply will go to jail. The Food Safety Accountability Act will help to do that in the most egregious cases.

Current statutes do not provide sufficient criminal sanctions for those who violate our food safety laws with the intent to mislead or defraud. Doing so is already illegal, but it is merely a misdemeanor right now, and the Sentencing Commission has found that it generally does not result in jail time. The fines and recalls that usually result from criminal violations under current law fall short in protecting the public from harmful products. Too often, those who are willing to endanger our children in pursuit of profits view such fines or recalls as merely the cost of doing business.

In the last Congress, a mother from Vermont, Gabrielle Meunier, testified before the Senate Agriculture Committee about her seven-year-old son, Christopher, who became severely ill and was hospitalized for six days after he developed salmonella poisoning from peanut crackers. Thankfully, Christopher recovered, but Mrs. Meunier's story highlighted improvements that are needed in our food safety system. No parent should have to go through what she experienced. The American people should be confident that the food they buy for their families is safe.

After hearing Mrs. Meunier's account, I called on the Department of Justice to conduct a criminal investigation into the outbreak of salmonella that made Christopher and many others so sick. These products were linked to the deaths of nine people and have sickened more than 600 others. It appears that the company responsible knew that their peanut products had tested positive for deadly salmonella, but rather than immediately disposing of the products, the company sought ways to sell them anyway. The evidence suggests that the public was misled, and that the company put profit above the public's safety. The Food Safety Accountability Act increases the chances that those who disregard the safety of Americans and commit food safety crimes will face jail time, rather than merely a slap on the wrist, for their criminal conduct.

On behalf of the hundreds of individuals sickened by recent salmonella outbreaks, I hope Senators of both parties will act swiftly to pass this bill. We have come a long way, but must continue to be diligent to ensure that our food safety system is strong. The Justice Department must be given the tools it needs to investigate and prosecute crime involving food safety, and we must work together, from farm to