

Whereas States that have adopted Common Core State Standards are given preference in the application process for the waivers issued under the authority of section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861) that provide flexibility with respect to certain requirements of such Act;

Whereas States that have adopted Common Core State Standards are currently collaborating to develop common assessments that will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards and replace existing end-of-the-year State assessments;

Whereas these assessments will be available in the 2014–2015 school year;

Whereas 2 consortia of States are developing common assessments: the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC);

Whereas national standards lead to national assessments and national assessments lead to a national curriculum;

Whereas education standards help teachers ensure their students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful by providing clear goals for student learning;

Whereas challenging academic standards are vital to ensuring students are college and career ready;

Whereas blanket education standards should not be a prerequisite for Federal funding;

Whereas States are incentivized to adopt Common Core State Standards by the explicit correlation between the adoption of the Common Core State Standards by the State and the preference provided to such States through the Race to the Top program and the flexibility waivers issued under the authority of section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861);

Whereas the Secretary of Education has created a system of grants and waivers that influence, incentivize, and coerce State educational agencies, commissions, and boards into implementing common elementary and secondary school standards and assessments endorsed by the Secretary;

Whereas when Federal funds are linked to the adoption of common education standards, the end result is increased Federal control over education and a decreased ability of schools to meet the individual needs of the students in their schools;

Whereas the implementation of Common Core State Standards will eventually impact home school and private school students when institutions of higher education are pressured to align their admission and readiness standards with curricula based on the Common Core State Standards;

Whereas the 10th amendment of the Constitution of the United States reads, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people”; and

Whereas, throughout the course of United States history, States have maintained the responsibility of education based on the 10th amendment because the explicit power of educating children was not delegated to the United States by the Constitution: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) States and local educational agencies should maintain the right and responsibility of determining educational curricula, programs of instruction, and assessments for elementary and secondary education;

(2) the Federal Government should not incentivize the adoption of common education standards or the creation of a na-

tional assessment to align with such standards; and

(3) no application process for any Federal grant funds, or for waivers issued by the Secretary under the authority of section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861), that occurs after the date of adoption of this resolution should award any additional points, or provide any preference, for the adoption of the Common Core State Standards or any other national common education standards.

SENATE RESOLUTION 346—CONGRATULATING THE ATHLETES FROM THE STATE OF WASHINGTON AND ACROSS THE UNITED STATES WHO ARE SET TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2014 WINTER OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES IN SOCHI, RUSSIA

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 346

Whereas the 2014 United States Olympic and Paralympic Team, also known as Team USA, is the largest delegation ever sent to a Winter Olympic Games by the United States;

Whereas the 230 members of Team USA represent the diversity of their Nation and will perform, with skill and grace, to the best of their ability;

Whereas diversity among national Olympic teams fosters greater understanding and peace among nations by upholding the values of the Olympic movement;

Whereas the members of Team USA will represent the spirit of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and fulfill the principles of modern Olympism as outlined in the Olympic Charter as modified by the International Olympic Committee on September 9, 2013;

Whereas on February 11, 2014, women will compete in ski jumping for the first time in Olympic history;

Whereas members of Team USA will compete in all 15 disciplines in the 2014 Winter Olympic Games across 7 sports, and in 94 of 98 medal events;

Whereas Team USA features 106 returning Olympians, including 13 Olympic gold medalists;

Whereas the members of Team USA from the great State of Washington who will proudly represent their Nation are—

(1) Erik Bjornsen of Winthrop, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(2) Sadie Bjornsen of Winthrop, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(3) J.R. Celski of Federal Way, Washington, who will compete in the 500 meter, 1,000 meter, 1,500 meter, and 5,000 meter relay events in short track speedskating;

(4) Patrick Deneen of Cle Elum, Washington, who will compete in the moguls event in freestyle skiing;

(5) Brian Gregg of Winthrop, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(6) Torin Koos of Leavenworth, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(7) Christian Niccum of Woodinville, Washington, who will compete in luge; and

(8) Angeli VanLaanen of Bellingham, Washington, who will compete in the halpipse event in freestyle skiing; and

Whereas all of the athletes of Team USA should be commended and honored for their

contributions to sport, our country, and the Olympic movement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges the dedication of the United States Olympic Committee, the national governing bodies of each sport that is an event at the 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the administrators, coaches, families, and all others who support the athletes participating in the Olympic and Paralympic Games; and

(2) congratulates the members of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Teams and wishes them success at the 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia.

SENATE RESOLUTION 347—PROVIDING FOR COMPLETION OF THE ACCELERATED TRANSITION OF UNITED STATES COMBAT AND MILITARY AND SECURITY OPERATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 347

Whereas, in June 2013, the Government of Afghanistan assumed the lead for combat operations in all regions of Afghanistan consistent with the schedule agreed to by President Barack Obama and President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,
SECTION 1. COMPLETION OF ACCELERATED TRANSITION OF UNITED STATES COMBAT AND MILITARY AND SECURITY OPERATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States—

(1) that, in coordination with the Government of Afghanistan, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member countries, and other allies in Afghanistan, the President shall complete the accelerated transition of United States military and security operations to the Government of Afghanistan and redeploy United States Armed Forces from Afghanistan (including operations involving military and security-related contractors) by not later than December 31, 2014; and

(2) to pursue diplomatic efforts leading to a political settlement and reconciliation of the internal conflict in Afghanistan.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that, should the President determine the necessity to maintain United States troops in Afghanistan to carry out missions after December 31, 2014, any such presence and missions should be authorized by a separate vote of Congress not later than June 1, 2014.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as limiting or prohibiting any authority of the President to—

(1) modify the military strategy, tactics, and operations of United States Armed Forces as such Armed Forces redeploy from Afghanistan;

(2) attack al Qaeda forces wherever such forces are located;

(3) provide financial support and equipment to the Government of Afghanistan for the training and supply of Afghanistan military and security forces;

(4) gather, provide, and share intelligence with United States allies operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan; or