

To the Congress of the United States:

My Administration fully supports the underlying objectives of the recommendations that the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (the "Commission") offered in January. These recommendations represent an important step forward in protecting the long-term viability of the All-Volunteer Force, improving quality-of-life for service members and their families, and ensuring the fiscal sustainability of the military compensation and retirement systems.

As I directed in my letter of March 30, my team has worked with the Commission to further analyze the recommendations and identify areas of agreement. At this time I am prepared to support specific proposals for 10 of the Commission's 15 recommendations, either as proposed or with modifications that have been discussed among the Department of Defense, other agencies, and the Commission. These include the following:

- Survivor Benefit Plan
- Financial Education
- Medical Personnel Readiness
- Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs Collaboration
- Child Care
- Service Member Education
- Transition Assistance
- Nutritional Financial Assistance
- Dependent Space-Available Travel
- Report on Military Connected Dependents

In some instances, the Department of Defense is already taking actions to implement these recommendations, and I will direct the Department to develop plans to complete this implementation. In those areas where legislation is required, I expect the Secretary of Defense to transmit to the Congress on my behalf the relevant legislative proposals, which I recommend be enacted without delay.

With respect to the remaining recommendations, given their complexity and our solemn responsibility to ensure that any changes further the objectives above, we will continue working with the Commission to understand how the following proposals would affect the All-Volunteer Force:

- Blended Retirement System
- Reserve Component Duty Statuses
- Exceptional Family Member's Support
- Commissary and Exchange Consolidation

I believe there is merit in all of these recommendations and that they deserve careful consideration and study. I will ensure that the Congress is kept apprised of this ongoing work.

Finally, I agree with the Commission that we need to continue to improve the military health care system. The health care reforms proposed in my Fiscal Year 2016 Budget are a good first step and offer service members, retirees, and their families more control and choice over their health care decisions. This remains a critical issue, and my Administration will work with the

Commission and interested Members of Congress in the coming months to develop additional reform proposals for consideration as part of my Fiscal Year 2017 Budget.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, April 30, 2015.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:27 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 651. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the "Sister Ann Keefe Post Office".

At 4:13 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 43. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds, the rotunda of the Capitol, and Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for official Congressional events surrounding the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to the United States Capitol.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 651. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the "Sister Ann Keefe Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1498. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Kenneth E. Floyd, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1499. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Department of Energy Process to Consider LNG Export Applications"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1500. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2015-0519); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1501. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of de-

fense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2015-0517); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1502. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14-142); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1503. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Phenol, 2-(2H-benzotriazol-2-yl)-6-dodecyl-4-methyl-; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9925-78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1504. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Azoxystrobin; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9926-24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1505. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "General Permits and Permits by Rule for the Federal Minor New Source Review Program in Indian Country for Five Source Categories" ((RIN2060-AQ95) (FRL No. 9919-85-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1506. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designate Facilities and Pollutants; Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New Mexico, and the City of Albuquerque, New Mexico; Control of Emissions from Existing Sewage Sludge Incinerator Units" (FRL No. 9927-00-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1507. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to the State Implementation Plan; Stage I Regulations" (FRL No. 99247-10-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1508. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Arkansas; Revisions to the State Implementation Plan; Fee Regulations" (FRL No. 9926-91-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1509. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)" (FRL No. 9926-81-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-19. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of North Dakota urging the United States Congress to call for a constitutional convention for the sole purpose of proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States which requires a balanced federal budget; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3015

Whereas, Article V of the Constitution of the United States mandates that upon the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the states, Congress shall call a convention for proposing amendments; and

Whereas, this application is to be considered as covering the balanced budget amendment language of the presently outstanding balanced budget applications from other states; and

Whereas, this application shall be aggregated for the purpose of attaining the two-thirds necessary to require the calling of a convention for proposing a balanced budget amendment, but shall not be aggregated with any applications on any other subject; and

Whereas, this application is a continuing application until the legislatures of at least two-thirds of the states have made applications on the same subject; and

Whereas, the North Dakota Legislative Assembly deems an amendment to the Constitution of the United States requiring a balanced federal budget to be necessary for the good of the American people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives of North Dakota, the Senate Concurring therein:

That the Sixty-fourth Legislative Assembly urges the Congress of the United States to call a convention of the states limited to proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States requiring that in the absence of a national emergency the total of all federal appropriations made by the Congress for any fiscal year may not exceed the total of all estimated federal revenues for that fiscal year, together with any related and appropriate fiscal restraints; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of State forward copies of this resolution to the President and Secretary of the Senate and the Speaker and Clerk of the House of Representatives of the Congress, to each member of the United States Congressional Delegation, and also to transmit copies to the presiding officers of each of the legislative houses in the United States, requesting their cooperation.

POM-20. A joint memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho urging the United States Congress to expedite appropriation of funds to significantly enhance dreissenid monitoring and prevention efforts and to implement the intent of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 101

Whereas, maintaining a healthy suite of economic, environmental and social ecosystem services in aquatic systems is integral to the quality of life in the State of Idaho; and

Whereas, healthy aquatic habitats provide clean drinking water, flood control, transportation, recreation, purification of human and industrial wastes, power generation,

habitat for native plants and animals, production of their foods, marketable goods, and cultural benefits; and

Whereas, aquatic invasive species, including mussels such as dreissenids, cause irreparable ecological damage to many waters in the United States; and

Whereas, dreissenids have not yet been detected in the Pacific North-West. The estimated cost to address established populations of dreissenids in the Pacific North-West Economic Region is almost \$500 million annually; and

Whereas, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act was signed in June 2014 and authorizes \$20 million for Columbia River Basin dreissenid efforts through the Secretary of the Army: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the member of the First Regular Session of the Sixty-third Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of Representatives concurring therein, that we respectfully request Congress expedite appropriation of these funds to significantly enhance monitoring and prevention efforts and to implement the intent of the Act; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate be, and she is hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of this Memorial to the President of the United States Barack Obama, the United States Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Congress, and to the congressional delegation representing the State of Idaho in the Congress of the United States.

POM-21. A resolution approved by the Electors of the City of Watertown, Wisconsin, calling for reclaiming the expansion of the rights of artificial legal entities and the corrupting influence of unregulated political spending; and supporting an amendment to the United States Constitution, stating: only human beings—not corporations, unions, nonprofits, or similar associations—are endowed with constitutional rights, and that money is not speech, and therefore regulating political contributions and spending is not equivalent to limiting political speech; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, without amendment:

S. 993. A bill to increase public safety by facilitating collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, veterans treatment services, mental health treatment, and substance abuse systems.

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, without amendment:

S. 1177. An original bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MCCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Peter Levine, of Maryland, to be Deputy Chief Management Officer of the Department of Defense.

Army nomination of Col. Raymond S. Dingle, to be Brigadier General.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. (1h) Ron. J. MacLaren, to be Rear Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Herman A. Shelanski, to be Vice Admiral.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Col. James J. Burks, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. James C. Balsarak and ending with Brig. Gen. Carol A. Timmons, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 13, 2015.

Air Force nomination of Col. Kyle W. Robinson, to be Brigadier General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Robert D. Carlson and ending with Col. Tracy L. Smith, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 13, 2015.

Army nomination of Chaplain (Col.) Thomas L. Solhjelm, to be Brigadier General.

Navy nomination of Capt. Danelle M. Barrett, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Navy nomination of Capt. Ronald C. Copley, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. David L. Goldfein, to be General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Timothy M. Ray, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. Darryl L. Roberson, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr., to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Eric C. Bush, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Alan R. Lynn, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Jill K. Faris, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Gary H. Cheek, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Christian A. Rofrano, to be Brigadier General.

Navy nomination of Vice Adm. Nora W. Tyson, to be Vice Admiral.

Marine Corps nomination of Maj. Gen. Mark A. Brilakis, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nomination of Maj. Gen. Robert S. Walsh, to be Lieutenant General.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nomination of Troy S. Thomas, to be Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Linell A. Letendre, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Bamidele A. Adetunji and ending with Keri L. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Travis M. Allen and ending with Jeromy James Wells, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Richard S. Beyea III and ending with Travis C. Yelton, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Keith L. Clark and ending with Jennie Leigh L. Stoddart, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 20, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Talib Y. Ali and ending with Gabriel