

By Mr. McCAIN:

S. 1895. A bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act for purposes of making claims under such Act based on exposure to atmospheric nuclear testing; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce legislation that would amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, RECA, by adding Mohave County, AZ, to the list of counties eligible for downwinder compensation. A similar proposal was introduced today by Congress PAUL GOSAR. I am hopeful this bill will help close a painful chapter for those Arizonans who were arguably the most affected by nuclear weapons testing during the Cold War.

In 1990, Congress enacted the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to compensate victims or their survivors who suffered certain illnesses caused by fallout exposure “down wind” of atmospheric nuclear weapons testing during the 1950’s and 1960’s. Among other requirements, eligibility is limited to individuals who can prove their physical presence in one of several affected counties. Astonishingly, despite its close proximity to the Nevada Test Site, the original RECA law and its subsequent amendments never listed Mohave County proper as an affected area. I believe the people of Mohave County deserve to see righted this unjust policy which has obstructed their ability to qualify for compensation.

I understand that several of my colleagues have proposed similar RECA amendments in previous years. I would hope that these various RECA proposals give additional consideration to an April 2005 report by the National Academy of Sciences, NAS, that assessed, among other things, whether additional geographic areas should be added to the RECA program. The NAS study revealed a much wider area of radioactive fallout than originally identified when the RECA law was first written. The report also recommended replacing the geographic area criteria with a new science-based process for determining compensation eligibility, a method similar to what’s used in the Radiation Exposed-Veterans Compensation Act and the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act. I believe it is worthwhile for policy makers to consider the recommendations of the NAS report.

This bill is an expansion of the RECA program and thus I will be working with my colleagues to find funding offsets to ensure there is no net increase in government spending if this legislation were enacted. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 234—TO AUTHORIZE THE PRINTING OF A COLLECTION OF THE RULES OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

Mr. BLUNT submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 234

Resolved, That a collection of the rules of the committees of the Senate, together with related materials, be printed as a Senate document, and that there be printed 250 additional copies of such document for the use of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

SENATE RESOLUTION 235—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2015 AS “NATIONAL SPINAL CORD INJURY AWARENESS MONTH”

Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. NELSON) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 235

Whereas the estimated over 1,275,000 individuals in the United States who live with a spinal cord injury cost society billions of dollars in health care costs and lost wages;

Whereas an estimated 100,000 of those individuals are veterans who suffered a spinal cord injury while serving as members of the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas work-related accidents are the leading cause of spinal cord injuries;

Whereas motor vehicle crashes are the second leading cause of spinal cord injuries and traumatic brain injuries;

Whereas 70 percent of all spinal cord injuries that occur in children under the age of 18 are a result of a motor vehicle accident;

Whereas every 48 minutes a person will become paralyzed, underscoring the urgent need to develop new neuroprotection, pharmacological, and regeneration treatments to reduce, prevent, and reverse paralysis; and

Whereas increased education and investment in research are key factors in improving outcomes for victims of spinal cord injuries, improving the quality of life of victims, and ultimately curing paralysis: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 2015 as “National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month”;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month;

(3) continues to support research to find better treatments and therapies, and a cure for spinal cord injuries;

(4) supports clinical trials for new therapies that offer promise and hope to individuals living with paralysis; and

(5) commends the dedication of national, regional, and local organizations, researchers, doctors, volunteers, and people across the United States that are working to improve the quality of life of people living with spinal cord injuries and their families.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 9:45 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10:30 a.m., in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “Wireless Broadband and the Future of Spectrum Policy.”

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.”

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 9 a.m., in room SH-216 of the Hart Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act: Combating Campus Sexual Assault.”

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, in room SD-628 of