

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SASSE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. PAUL):

S. Res. 15. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Mexico City policy should be permanently established; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. McCONNELL:

S. Res. 16. A resolution to constitute the majority party's membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. Res. 17. A resolution to constitute the minority party's membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 41

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 41, a bill to amend part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate covered part D drug prices on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries.

S. 128

At the request of Mr. NELSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 128, a bill to provide provisional protected presence to qualified individuals who came to the United States as children.

S. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. KAINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 6, a resolution objecting to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 and to all efforts that undermine direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians for a secure and peaceful settlement.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BENNET, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN.

S. 178. A bill to prevent elder abuse and exploitation and improve the justice system's response to victims in elder abuse and exploitation cases; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. Pisesident, I have fought for years to protect our Nation's seniors from abuse and exploitation, initially, as former Chairman of the Senate Aging Committee, former Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and more recently, as Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

This past June, I chaired a Judiciary Committee hearing on Protecting Older Americans from Financial Exploitation. At the hearing, we heard about numerous scams in which seniors were targeted time after time, resulting in their being defrauded, often with devastating consequences. We also heard that many older Americans don't report instances of elder abuse or exploitation due to embarrassment, a refusal to acknowledge that they were victimized, or reliance on the perpetrator as their caretaker.

Sadly, these accounts of elder abuse are nothing new. What has changed is that the scams targeting seniors are becoming increasingly sophisticated. That is one of the reasons why elder financial exploitation has been dubbed "the crime of the 21st century."

I have made it a top priority to get the Federal Government to step up its efforts to fight the abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of our Nation's seniors.

Last year, I called on the Justice Department to outline its efforts to prevent and respond to instances of elder abuse. First, I sent a letter to the Department to find out what it's doing to protect seniors from a new and particularly troubling form of exploitation: the photographing and online publication of nursing home residents in embarrassing and compromising situations.

I also sent a letter to inquire about the Department's efforts to fight imposter scams, in which fraudsters pose as employees of the IRS or another government agency, in order to deprive ordinary Americans of millions of dollars of their hard earned money. And as tax season approaches once again, it's critical that folks watch out for these deceitful scams.

I also asked about the data the Department is collecting on financial exploitation, as well as how this data is being used to support Federal efforts to protect America's seniors.

In its response to my inquiries, the Justice Department effectively admitted that it falls short in several respects. The Department said that it "does not collect data on the prevalence of elder financial exploitation nationwide." Further, the Department said that it can't provide statistical information on the number of cases it has prosecuted for elder financial exploitation.

What all this means is that we are not getting the full picture of elder financial exploitation.

We do know that some older Americans' trusting and polite nature, combined with their hard-earned retirement savings, make them particularly attractive targets for fraudsters. We also know that the abuse and exploitation of older Americans is on the rise and it can take many forms.

Financial exploitation is the most widespread form of elder abuse, costing America's seniors between an estimated \$2.9 billion and \$36 billion annually. But, sadly, its costs aren't limited to the negative effect on seniors' bank accounts. Victims suffer all sorts of

negative effects, including diminished health, loss of independence, and psychological distress.

It is estimated that up to 37 percent of seniors in the United States are affected by some form of financial exploitation in any 5-year period.

In my home State of Iowa, so-called grandparent scams are on the rise. In these scams, fraudsters present themselves to an older American as a grandchild in distress, hoping to convince the grandparent to send cash or give out a credit card number.

Con artists are also using sweepstakes scams to steal money from seniors. A senior is called and told they have won a prize or sum of money. But before they can claim the supposed prize, the victim is required to pay taxes or processing fees. Once the money is paid to cover the taxes and fees, however, no prize ever materializes.

Other instances of elder financial exploitation are more personal in nature and have especially devastating effects. Some victims are pressured into signing over a deed, modifying a will, or giving a power of attorney. Americans have lost their farms, homes, and life savings to this form of fraud.

In short, elder abuse and exploitation is a serious problem, and it demands a strong response. It requires all of us to work together in a collaborative way.

So, today I am proud to introduce the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act. I thank my colleagues—Senators BLUMENTHAL, TILLIS, KLOBUCHAR, and CORNYN for collaborating with me on this comprehensive and bipartisan bill's development and for joining as original cosponsors. It takes a multi-pronged approach to combating the abuse and financial exploitation of our nation's senior citizens.

We have heard a need for specialized prosecutors and more focused efforts to combat abuse and exploitation. That is why the bill directs the Attorney General to designate at least one federal prosecutor in each U.S. Attorney's Office to serve as an Elder Justice Coordinator for that district.

To ensure that elder abuse is a priority for the Federal Trade Commission and the Justice Department, the bill also calls for each agency to have an Elder Justice Coordinator.

We also need to send a strong message that efforts to target our Nation's seniors won't be tolerated. That is why the bill enhances elder victims' access to restitution and increases penalties for criminals who use telemarketing or email in their schemes to defraud seniors.

The bill also requires that the Justice Department partner with the Department of Health and Human Services to provide training and technical assistance to State and local governments on the investigation, prevention, prosecution, and mitigation of elder abuse and neglect.

Finally we have heard about the need for more data on financial exploitation