

(Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 728, a bill to direct the Joint Committee on the Library to obtain a statue of Shirley Chisholm for placement in the United States Capitol.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 102—DESIGNATING APRIL 2019 AS “SECOND CHANCE MONTH”

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 102

Whereas every individual is endowed with human dignity and value;

Whereas redemption and second chances are values of the United States;

Whereas millions of individuals in the United States have a criminal record;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of individuals return to their communities from Federal and State prisons every year;

Whereas neighbors returning to their communities have paid their debt to society after committing a crime but still face significant legal and societal barriers (referred to in this preamble as “collateral consequences”);

Whereas returning individuals face collateral consequences automatically, regardless of—

(1) a nexus between the legal or societal barrier and public safety;

(2) the seriousness of the offense committed;

(3) the time passed since the offense; or

(4) the efforts of the individual to make amends or earn back the trust of the public;

Whereas gaining meaningful employment is one of the most significant predictors of successful reentry into society and reducing future criminal activity;

Whereas many individuals who have previously been incarcerated struggle to find employment because of collateral consequences, which are often not directly related to the offense committed or any proven public safety benefit;

Whereas many States have laws that prohibit an individual with a criminal record from working in certain industries or obtaining professional licenses;

Whereas education has also been shown to be a significant predictor of successful reentry into society;

Whereas an individual with a criminal record often has a lower level of educational attainment than the general population and has significant difficulty acquiring admission to and funding for educational programs;

Whereas an individual convicted of certain crimes is often barred from receiving the financial aid necessary to acquire additional skills and knowledge;

Whereas an individual with a criminal record also often faces collateral consequences in securing a place to live;

Whereas an individual with a criminal record is often barred from seeking access to public housing;

Whereas an individual with a criminal record also often faces other collateral consequences, such as an inability to regain voting rights, volunteer in the community, and secure identification documentation;

Whereas an individual who has been convicted and incarcerated may incur significant debt as a result of the conviction and incarceration;

Whereas collateral consequences prevent millions of individuals in the United States from contributing fully to their families and communities;

Whereas collateral consequences can contribute to recidivism, which increases crime and victimization and decreases public safety;

Whereas the inability to find gainful employment and other collateral consequences of conviction inhibit the economic mobility of an individual with a criminal record, which can negatively impact the well-being of the children and the families of the individual for generations;

Whereas the bipartisan First Step Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-391) was signed into law on December 21, 2018, to increase opportunities for individuals incarcerated in Federal prison to participate in meaningful recidivism reduction programs and prepare for a second chance;

Whereas the Second Chance Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-199; 122 Stat. 657), which has resulted in the provision of reentry services to more than 164,000 individuals in 49 States and the District of Columbia since its enactment, was reauthorized through the First Step Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-391);

Whereas April 21 marks the anniversary of the death of Charles Colson, who used his second chance following his incarceration for a Watergate-related crime to found Prison Fellowship, the largest outreach program to prisoners, former prisoners, and their families in the United States; and

Whereas the designation of April as “Second Chance Month” can contribute to increased public awareness about the impact of collateral consequences, the need for closure for those who have paid their debt to society, and opportunities for individuals, employers, congregations, and communities to extend second chances: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2019 as “Second Chance Month”;

(2) honors the work of communities, governmental institutions, nonprofit organizations, congregations, employers, and individuals to remove unnecessary legal and societal barriers that prevent an individual with a criminal record from becoming a productive member of society; and

(3) calls upon the people of the United States to observe Second Chance Month through actions and programs that promote awareness of those unnecessary legal and social barriers and provide closure for individuals with a criminal record who have paid their debt to society.

SENATE RESOLUTION 103—DESIGNATING MARCH 27, 2019, AS “NATIONAL ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS DAY”

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

S. RES. 103

Whereas assistive technology is any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of people with disabilities and older adults;

Whereas the term “assistive technology service” means any service that directly assists a person with a disability or an older adult in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device;

Whereas, in 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that 1 in 4 people in the United States, or almost 61,000,000 individuals, has a disability;

Whereas, in 2017, the Department of Education reported that there were more than 6,700,000 children with disabilities;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that, among adults 65 years of age and older, 2 in 5 have a disability;

Whereas assistive technology allows people with disabilities and older adults to be included in their communities and in inclusive classrooms and workplaces;

Whereas assistive technology devices and services are not luxury items but necessities for millions of people with disabilities and older adults, without which they would be unable to live in their communities, access education, and obtain, retain, and advance gainful, competitive integrated employment;

Whereas the availability of assistive technology in the workplace promotes economic self-sufficiency, enhances work participation, and is critical to the employment of people with disabilities and older adults; and

Whereas State assistive technology programs support a continuum of services that include—

(1) the exchange, repair, recycling, and other reutilization of assistive technology devices;

(2) device loan programs that provide short term loans of assistive technology devices to individuals, employers, public agencies, and others;

(3) the demonstration of devices to inform decision making; and

(4) providing State financing activities to help individuals purchase or obtain assistive technology through a variety of initiatives, such as financial loan programs, leasing programs, and other financing alternatives, that give individuals affordable, flexible options to purchase or obtain assistive technology: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 27, 2019, as “National Assistive Technology Awareness Day”; and

(2) commends—

(A) assistive technology specialists and program coordinators for their hard work and dedication to serving people with disabilities who are in need of finding the proper assistive technology to meet their individual needs; and

(B) professional organizations and researchers who are dedicated to facilitating the access and acquisition of assistive technology for people with disabilities and older adults in need of assistive technology devices.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I have a request for one committee to meet during today's session of the Senate. It has the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committee is authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, March 11, 2019, at 5:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing on the nomination of Ronald D. Vitiello, of Illinois, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Joseph V. Cuffari, of Arizona, to be Inspector General, both of the Department of Homeland Security.

NATIONAL ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS DAY

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 103, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 103) designating March 27, 2019, as "National Assistive Technology Awareness Day."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 103) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 729

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 729) to prohibit the use of funds to Federal agencies to establish a panel, task force, advisory committee, or other effort to challenge the scientific consensus on climate change, and for other purposes.

Mr. BOOZMAN. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2019

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. Tuesday, March 12; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Matey nomination under the previous order; finally, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of our Democratic colleagues.

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

The Senator from Oregon.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, it was a powerful opportunity to join my colleague from Delaware, Senator CARPER, in traveling to the Northern Triangle of Central America—Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador—to try to understand more about the dynamics in that region, which are driving so many families to come north, to take the difficult journey through Central America, through Mexico, to come to our border and to ask for asylum.

This has been a significant flow, which has expanded greatly. We have seen in the past that most of those arriving on our border were men from Mexico who were seeking work but not so much now. Now we have this flow of families from Central America. These families are traveling to find something better for their lives and for their children's lives. It is not an easy journey, and it is a journey that has created quite a conversation here in the United States of America.

The conversation coming from our President has been this: How do we stop them from asserting asylum at the border?

President Trump has a number of strategies to deter families from coming. His strategy was to separate children from their parents, treat those fleeing as criminals, create great trauma for the children, and use this as a strategy of deterrence. This was first laid out very clearly by John Kelly just months into the administration. In March of 2017, he said: Yes, this is exactly what we are considering.

The administration then proceeded to implement it first as a pilot project and later as an all-out strategy to treat those migrating as criminals, lock up the parents, separate the children, inflict trauma, and deter people from coming. I can state that any strategy that involves mistreating children as a political tactic—a political message of deterrence—is simply evil. It comes from a very, very dark place in the heart of this administration to deliberately injure children in this fashion.

Why doesn't the President look to Central America and ask: What is motivating these families to come? How can we change that motivation? What are the forces at work in that region?

Those were the questions that Senator CARPER and I were undertaking to

answer on our recent trip, and I appreciate so much that he went through the great work of organizing it.

We went first to Guatemala, then to Honduras, then to El Salvador. We met with the President. We met with the incoming President of El Salvador. We met with the civil society organizations—those who understand the roots of what is going on within the society—and here is what we learned. We learned there were three powerful forces driving families to leave those countries: security, economics, and corruption.

Let's talk a little bit about those three things.

Security. I had the chance to meet a woman and her daughter, Gabriella and her baby Andrea. Gabriella told me about her journey. She said that her family took a loan from a private bank, which probably meant a financial loan from the local drug cartel or financial group associated with a drug cartel. The family wasn't able to repay the loan. They were given a deadline. They were told: If you don't repay the loan, one of your family members dies, and that will be you, Gabriella.

Gabriella was pregnant. She figured that as long as she was pregnant, they would not kill her. So when she was 8 months pregnant—1 month ago—she fled the country to save herself and to save her baby.

I met her and her baby on the border. They had just crossed the bridge into the United States of America. I asked her: How did you get past the American border guards, who wouldn't allow anyone across the bridge if they didn't have a passport or visa? Her face lit up for a moment. She said: Well, I was rebuffed time and again at the center of the bridge, not allowed to come across and assert asylum, and I was desperate, blocked on the Mexican side.

Then I saw there was a pedestrian bridge and a car bridge, and on the car bridge were folks who were washing windows for tips. So I asked to use an extra squeegee from one of the window washers, who gave it to me, and I washed windows on the car bridge to get into the United States of America. And there she was at the foot of the bridge with her baby.

She told me that because she fled with her baby, those who were enforcing that private loan from that private bank killed her uncle. That is the security issue that comes with all of the various versions of that story.

I met another woman, Patricia. Patricia had a 14-year-old daughter. Patricia had to pay extortion money. The President of Guatemala told me that every business has to pay extortion money. In this case, though, Patricia had no money left to pay the extortion. So the drug gang—or the gang that controls the streets and runs the extortion—came to her house and assaulted her 14-year-old daughter. So she fled. She fled to protect her daughter from any other such horrific circumstances. She came to the United States.