

(Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2815, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the National Purple Heart Honor Mission.

S. 2833

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2833, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to extend the consumer credit protections provided to members of the Armed Forces and their dependents under title 10, United States Code, to all consumers.

S. 2881

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 2881, a bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to make not less than 280 megahertz of spectrum available for terrestrial use, and for other purposes.

S. 2898

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2898, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for a full annuity supplement for certain air traffic controllers.

S. 2909

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2909, a bill to extend the authority of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to enter into leases of non-excess property of the Administration.

S. 2974

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2974, a bill to require the Postmaster General to establish a comprehensive organizational strategy to combat the use of the mail in the distribution of illicit drugs.

S. 2994

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) were added as cosponsors of S. 2994, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require information reporting with respect to the qualified opportunity zone tax incentives enacted by the 2017 tax reform legislation, to require public reports related to such tax incentives, and for other purposes.

S. 3002

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3002, a bill to amend the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 to increase amounts transferred to the Trade Enforcement Trust Fund and to require the use of certain amounts in the fund to implement labor obligations in a free trade agreement with Mexico, and for other purposes.

S. 3004

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3004, a bill to protect human rights and enhance opportunities for LGBTI people around the world, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 9

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 9, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that tax-exempt fraternal benefit societies have historically provided and continue to provide critical benefits to the people and communities of the United States.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION

By Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 3028. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to strengthen Federal-State partnerships in postsecondary education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today, most jobs require some kind of postsecondary credential, whether a certificate, an associate's or bachelor's degree, an advanced or professional degree, or an apprenticeship. Moreover, the workplace is changing with automation, artificial intelligence, and the so-called gig economy transforming the nature of work. Yet, postsecondary education seems increasingly risky or out of reach for too many Americans. That is why I am proud to be introducing the bipartisan Partnerships for Affordability and Student Success (PASS) Act with my colleague, Senator COLLINS.

At a time when we need to equip people with the foundational skills and knowledge they need to succeed in this changing environment, we see college costs and student loan debt soaring. We see too many students who start postsecondary education unable to finish, leaving them in debt but without a degree or postsecondary credential. As a result, we see public confidence in our system of higher education declining. According to a recent Pew Research Center survey, 61 percent of Americans say that our system of higher education is headed in the wrong direction.

The federal government cannot solve this crisis on its own. States are critical partners in making college accessible, affordable, and accountable. However, state funding for higher education is lower today than it was before the onset of the Great Recession. According to the latest State Higher Education Finance report published by the State Higher Education Executive Officers, public colleges and universities have become more reliant on tuition dollars for their operations. In 2008, 35.8 percent of general operating

costs were supported by tuition payments. In 2018, that percentage increased to 46.6 percent. Today, in 27 states, tuition accounts for more than half of all higher education revenue. Moreover, the only federal-state partnership program for need-based financial aid—the Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) program—has not received appropriations since Fiscal Year 2010.

It is time to renew the federal-state partnership for higher education, first enacted in 1972 on a bipartisan basis. The PASS Act will revitalize the federal-state partnership through a formula grant to states with a focus on need-based aid, grants to institutions to improve student outcomes and reduce college costs, and public accountability.

In exchange for this new federal investment, states must make a commitment to maintain their investment in higher education and have a comprehensive plan for higher education with measurable goals for access, affordability, and student outcomes. At least half of the funding must be dedicated to need-based student financial aid. States also have the option of awarding grants to colleges and universities or partnerships between institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations to improve student outcomes, including enrollment, completion, and employment, and to develop innovative methods for reducing college costs. I am pleased to have the support of the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs, the Center for Law and Social Policy, the Institute for Higher Education Policy, the Association of Community College Trustees, and the National Skills Coalition.

This generation is facing a crisis in college affordability and student loan debt. With the PASS Act, we are providing the resources and incentives for states to take more responsibility to address college affordability and student loan debt and improve student outcomes. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation and look forward to working with them to include these and other key reforms in the upcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have 7 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.