to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–761. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Finalizing Medicare Regulations under Section 902 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act (MMA) of 2003; Calendar Year 2020”; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–762. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report to Congress on the Open Payments Program”; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–763. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Global Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the United States Department of State, and the United States Department of the Treasury, in their capacity as the United States representatives at international agreements other than Treaties entered into with Taiwan by the American Institute in Taiwan, to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

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–4. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Maine urging the Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service to include certain nonfood essentials in the supplemental nutrition assistance program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

SENATE PAPER 312
Whereas, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, is a federally governed, state-operated program under the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service with shared state responsibility and
Whereas, SNAP currently provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of qualifying recipients so they can purchase healthy food but fails to account for nonfood essentials, including toilet paper, soap, deodorant, toothpaste and menstrual products; and
Whereas, toilet paper, soap, deodorant, toothpaste and menstrual products are essential products needed for human dignity and health; and
Whereas, if a person struggles with access to food, that person likely also struggles with access to nonfood essentials; and
Whereas, a person who does not have access to nonfood essentials, especially menstrual products and toilet paper, may be forced to use inappropriate and unsafe alternatives, thereby putting that person's health and the health of the person’s representative system at risk; and
Whereas, a person without access to nonfood essentials who cannot equally participate in work, the search for employment or many other activities due to the risk of embarrassment such as from odors or bleeding through clothing; and
Whereas, a person who lives in an abusive situation has an increased likelihood of having difficulty accessing menstrual products and other nonfood essentials; and
Whereas, it is a matter of human justice and dignity for recipients of SNAP benefits to be granted the authority to determine what essentials they most need; and
Whereas, the residents of this State who qualify for SNAP benefits have essential needs beyond food and should therefore be granted the dignity to select how to expend their SNAP benefits based upon their essential needs; now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That your Memorialists, respectfully urge and request that the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service enter into rulemaking to permit SNAP recipients to purchase the following nonfood essentials for recipient purchase: toilet paper, soap, deodorant, toothpaste and menstrual products, including but not limited to tampons, pads, liners and reusable cups, underwear and shields; and be it further
Resolved, That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States, for consideration in the federal budgeting process; to the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service; to the Nutrition Service Administrator, United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service; to the Food and Nutrition Service Associate Administrator of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service; to the Northeast Regional Office of the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service; to the President of the United States Senate; to the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and each Member of the United States House of Representatives.

POM–7. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Maine urging the United States Congress and the President of the United States to eliminate the Windfall Elimination Provision that penalizes Maine state retirees; to the Committee on Finance.

SENATE PAPER 332
Whereas, under current federal law, individuals who receive a Social Security benefit and a public retirement benefit derived from employment that is not covered under Social Security are subject to a reduction in the Social Security benefit; and
Whereas, the amount to be contained in the federal Social Security Act, 42 United States Code, Chapter 7, Subchapter II, Federal Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance Benefits, was reduced by the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision, greatly affect public employees, particularly women; and
Whereas, the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision reduce by a formula the Social Security benefit of a person who is also receiving a Social Security benefit with no applied reductions; and
Whereas, the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision both unfairly reduce benefits for those public employees and their spouses whose careers cross the line between the private and public sectors; and
Whereas, since many lower-paying public service jobs are held by women, both the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision have a disproportionally adverse effect; and
Whereas, in some cases, additional support in the form of income, housing, and prescription drug and other safety net assistance from the state and federal governments is needed to make up for the reductions imposed at the federal level; and
Whereas, other participants in Social Security do not have their benefits reduced in this manner; and
Whereas, to participate or not to participate in Social Security in public sector employment is a decision of employers, even though both the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision directly punish employees and their spouses; and
Whereas, although the Government Pension Offset was enacted in 1977 and the Windfall Elimination Provision was enacted in 1983, many of the benefits in dispute were paid into Social Security prior to that time; now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That We, your Memorialists, respectfully urge and request that the President of the United States and the Congress of the United States work together to support reform proposals that follow the following protections for low-income and moderate-income government retirees:
1. Protections permitting retention of a combined public pension and Social Security benefit with no applied reductions;
2. Protections permanently ensuring that level of benefit by indexing it to inflation; and
3. Protections ensuring that no current recipient's benefit is reduced by the reform legislation; and be it further
Resolved, That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States; the President of the United States Senate; the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; and each Member of the Maine Congressional Delegation.

POM–8. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Maine urging the United States Congress and the President of the United States to establish a national infrastructure bank; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SENATE PAPER 314
Whereas, the American Society of Civil Engineers states in its 2017 Report Card that the United States received a grade of D+ regarding the current state of infrastructure and that more than $4.5 trillion would be needed to restore the nation's infrastructure to a state of good repair, over $2 trillion in noninfrastructure projects is currently not funded by the Federal Government and the remainder of infrastructure projects is inadequately funded; and
Whereas, the Maine section of the American Society of Civil Engineers gave the State a grade of C– in 2020, including dams, D+; hazardous waste, D+; roads, D; transit, D; water, D; and sewer, D+; and
Whereas, the state highway system projects a drastic funding shortfall due to particularly burdensome on the finances of low-income and moderate-income public service workers, such as school teachers, clerical workers and school cafeteria employees; and
Whereas, the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision both unfairly reduce benefits for those public employees and their spouses whose careers cross the line between the private and public sectors; and
Whereas, since many lower-paying public service jobs are held by women, both the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision have a disproportionally adverse effect; and
Whereas, in some cases, additional support in the form of income, housing, and prescription drug and other safety net assistance from the state and federal governments is needed to make up for the reductions imposed at the federal level; and
Whereas, other participants in Social Security do not have their benefits reduced in this manner; and
Whereas, to participate or not to participate in Social Security in public sector employment is a decision of employers, even though both the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision directly punish employees and their spouses; and
Whereas, although the Government Pension Offset was enacted in 1977 and the Windfall Elimination Provision was enacted in 1983, many of the benefits in dispute were paid into Social Security prior to that time; now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That We, your Memorialists, respectfully urge and request that the President of the United States and the Congress of the United States work together to support reform proposals that follow the following protections for low-income and moderate-income government retirees:
1. Protections permitting retention of a combined public pension and Social Security benefit with no applied reductions;
2. Protections permanently ensuring that level of benefit by indexing it to inflation; and
3. Protections ensuring that no current recipient's benefit is reduced by the reform legislation; and be it further
Resolved, That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States; the President of the United States Senate; the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; and each Member of the Maine Congressional Delegation.
the pandemic related to coronavirus disease 2019 and preexisting financial deficits; drivers in the State spend over $1 billion per year in vehicle operating costs, congestion and crashes has the highest highway fatality rate in New England; and the State has 1,073 dams with an average age of over 100 years, and a minimum of $309 million is needed to maintain dam infrastructure; and

Whereas, a new National Infrastructure Bank is directly help finance all of these projects, and the United States Congress introduced H.R. 6422, “National Infrastructure Bank Act of 2020,” which would create a $4 trillion public entity that help finance infrastructure needs and hire millions who have lost their jobs during the pandemic, putting them into higher-paying infrastructure and related jobs; and

Whereas, the new National Infrastructure Bank is modeled on previous successful, similar institutions that built much of the nation’s infrastructure, and under United States Presidents George Washington, James Madison, Abraham Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt, the entity created and financed the infrastructure projects that made us the envy of the world and helped bring us out of the Great Depression and win World War II; and

Whereas, the new National Infrastructure Bank will be capitalized by using secure, existing United States Treasury debt, such as treasury bills typically held in large quantities by major investment institutions, requiring no new federal spending and no new taxes, and will be authorized to spend $4 trillion on urgently needed infrastructure projects; and

Whereas, the new National Infrastructure Bank will be authorized to perform as many jobs as any investor: new jobs, the payment of fair wages, mandate project labor agreements, ensure “buy American” policies, direct spending into distressed businesses and ensure minority hiring opportunities, and it is expected to increase the size of the economy by 4% to 5% each year; and

Whereas, the new National Infrastructure Bank is capitalized by major investment institutions, and requires no new federal spending and no new taxes, and will be authorized to spend $4 trillion on urgently needed infrastructure projects; and

Resolved, That suitable copies of this resolution be duly entered in the United States Senate; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That, after March 22, 1979, the 67th Legislative Assembly, in acting on the constitutionally mandated ratification of the proposed 1972 Equal Rights Amendment, officially lapsed at 11:59 p.m. on March 22, 1979, and be if further

Resolved, That suitable copies of this resolution be duly entered in the United States Senate; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of State forward copies of this resolution to the Governor of the State of Ohio, the Secretary of State for the Constitutionally mandated ratification of the proposed 1972 Equal Rights Amendment, the Vice President of the United States, the secretary and parliamentarian of the United States Senate; the Speaker, clerk, and parliamentarian of the United States House of Representatives; each member of the North Dakota Congressional Delegation; and the Archivist of the United States at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C.
Whereas, While we are in an unprecedented pandemic, and there is great need for expediency when processing unemployment claims, there must be some form of security check to prevent claims from being made in our constituents’ names without their knowledge or consent; and

Whereas, The federal attitude of “pay and chase” overemphasis on an expediting benefit payments without traditional safeguards, must be re-evaluated and changed; and

Whereas, Across the country, regardless of whether these fraudulent claims are through states’ traditional unemployment systems or the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, fraud perpetrators are being phoned off by domestic criminals and international thieves; and

Whereas, This fraud deprives our state and federal governments of necessary resources during a pandemic and costs our constituents money; and

Whereas, This fraud slows down the process by which unemployment benefits are distributed to those who are truly in need within our communities; and

Whereas, Instituting a system that stamps our framework to clear the way for resources to flow where they are needed more quickly and efficiently; and

Whereas, Ohioans who receive 1099-G tax forms showing unemployment benefits that they did not receive must navigate a cumbersome, frustrating, and unresponsive system to clear the fraud status from their account; now therefore be it

Resolved, That we, the members of the 114th General Assembly of the State of Ohio, urge the federal government to reinstitute the traditional unemployment system safeguards as well as new identification verification to ensure that the individuals requesting and receiving benefits under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program are those who truly need it, and not fraudulent actors; and be it further

Resolved, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate of each member of our Ohio Congressional delegation, the U.S. Secretary of Labor, and the news media of Ohio.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. DAINE (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):
S. 1221. A bill to require the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to create a classification system that accurately reflects the vital role of wildland firefighters; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. ROMNEY (for himself and Mr. LEE):
S. 1222. A bill to designate and adjust certain lands in the State of Utah as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. KAINKE, and Mr. WARNER):
S. 1223. A bill to revise the treatment of urbanized areas experiencing population changes following a major disaster; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):
S. 1224. A bill to reauthorize, and increase the total funding cap for, the America’s Agricultural Heritage Partnership, to redesignate the America’s Agricultural Heritage Partnership as the “Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area”, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MURPHY:
S. 1225. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require institutions of higher education to report revenue generated by each sports team, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMY):
S. 1226. A bill to designate the United States courthouse located at 1501 North 6th Street in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as the “Sylvia H. Rambo United States Courthouse”, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. TILLIS):
S. 1227. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to set the rate of pay for employees of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection in accordance with the General Schedule, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Ms. WARNEN, and Mr. MARKET)
S. 1228. A bill to provide for equitable treatment for Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HINCHICH (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. GRAPO, Mr. KING, Mr. COLLINS, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SINEMA, Mr. BENNET, Mr. HESTER, Mr. ROUNDS, and Mr. BURR):
S. 1229. A bill to modify the procedures for issuing special recreation permits for certain public land units, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRAMER (for himself, Ms. WARNEN, Ms. LUMMIS, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. FOSTER, Mr. ROUNDS, and Mr. BOOZMAN):
S. 1230. A bill to amend the Bank Service Company Act to provide improvements with respect to State banking agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Ms. HIRONO):
S. 1231. A bill to amend the Construction Consensus Procurement Improvement Act of 2020 to correct a provision on the prohibition on the use of a reverse auction, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. LUDWIN:
S. 1232. A bill to identify the maximum paycheck protection program loan amount for farmers and ranchers, sole proprietors, independent contractors, and self-employed individuals; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):
S. 1233. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide increased tax credits for森林ed areas and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):
S. 1234. A bill to provide for equitable treatment for Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MURPHY:
S. 1235. A bill to establish a United States Commission on Hate Crimes to study and make recommendations on the prevention of the commission of hate crimes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. BRAUN):
S. 1236. A bill to require the Secretary of Transportation to develop best practices for incorporating resiliency into emergency relief projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):
S. 1237. A bill to prevent the purchase of ammunition by prohibited purchasers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MURPHY:
S. 1238. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve the equal employment opportunity functions of Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

By Mr. MARKELK (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. BOOKER):