

By Ms. SNOWE:

S. 1694. A bill to prohibit insurance providers from denying or canceling health insurance coverage, or varying the premiums, terms, or conditions for health insurance coverage on the basis of genetic information or a request for genetic services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 1695. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to assess up to \$2 per person visiting the Grand Canyon or other national park to secure bonds for capital improvements to the park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. THURMOND:

S. 1696. A bill to provide antitrust clarification, to reduce frivolous antitrust litigation, to promote equitable resolution of disputes over the location of professional sports franchises, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. JEFFORDS (for himself, Mrs. KASSEBAUM, Mr. SIMON, and Mr. FEINGOLD):

S. Con. Res. 53. A concurrent resolution congratulating the people of the Republic of Sierra Leone on the success of their recent democratic multiparty elections; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. SNOWE:

S. 1694. A bill to prohibit insurance providers from denying or canceling health insurance coverage, or varying the premiums, terms, or conditions for health insurance coverage on the basis of genetic information or a request for genetic services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

##### THE GENETIC INFORMATION NONDISCRIMINATION IN HEALTH INSURANCE ACT OF 1996

• Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I introduce the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination in Health Insurance Act of 1996. I join Representative LOUISE SLAUGHTER, who introduced this bill in the House, in calling for an end to discrimination on the basis of genetic information in health insurance.

Progress in the field of genetics is accelerating at a breathtaking pace. Who could have predicted 20 years ago that scientists today could accurately identify the genes associated with cystic fibrosis, cancer, Alzheimers' and Huntington's disease? Today, scientists can, and as a result doctors are increasingly able to identify predispositions to certain diseases based on the results of genetic testing, and to successfully treat and manage such diseases. These scientific advances hold tremendous promise for the approximately 15 million people affected by the over 4,000 currently known genetic disorders, and the millions more who are carriers of genetic diseases who may pass them on to their children.

But as our knowledge of genetic predisposition to disease has grown, so has the potential for discrimination in health insurance.

As a legislator who has worked for many years on the issue of breast cancer, and as a woman with a history of breast cancer in her family, I am delighted with the possibilities for further treatment advances based on the recent discoveries of two genes related to breast cancer—BRCA1 and BRCA2. Women who inherit mutated forms of either gene have an 85-percent risk of developing breast cancer in their lifetime. Although there is no known treatment to ensure that women who carry the mutated gene do not develop breast cancer, genetic testing makes it possible for carriers of these mutated genes to take extra precautions—such as mammograms and self-examinations—in order to detect cancer at its earliest stages. This discovery is truly a momentous breakthrough.

However, the tremendous promise of genetic testing is being significantly threatened by insurance companies that use the results of genetic testing to deny or limit coverage to consumers. Unfortunately, this practice is relatively common today. In fact, a recent survey of individuals with a known genetic condition in their family revealed that 22 percent had been denied health insurance coverage because of genetic information.

In addition to the potentially devastating consequences health insurance denials on the basis of genetic information can have on American families, the fear of discrimination has equally harmful consequences for consumers and for scientific research. For example, many women who might take extra precautions if they knew they had the breast cancer gene may not seek testing because they fear losing their health insurance. Patients may be unwilling to disclose information about their genetic status to their physicians out of fear, hindering treatment or preventive efforts. And people may be unwilling to participate in potentially ground-breaking research trials because they do not want to reveal information about their genetic status.

The bill I am introducing today addresses these serious concerns by prohibiting health insurance providers from denying or canceling health insurance coverage or varying the terms, premiums, or conditions for health insurance for individuals or their family members on the basis of genetic information. It also prohibits insurance companies from discriminating against individuals who have requested or received genetic services.

My bill also contains important confidentiality provisions which prohibit insurance companies from disclosing genetic information about an individual without that person's written consent. And it prohibits an insurance provider from requesting someone to undergo, and from disclosing, genetic information about that person.

Finally, the bill allows individuals to sue for monetary damages or injunctive relief if an insurance company violates, or threatens to violate, these nondiscrimination or disclosure provisions.

I urge my colleagues to end the unfair practice of denying health care coverage to individuals on the basis of genetic information by supporting the bill I am introducing today.●

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 1695. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to assess up to \$2 per person visiting the Grand Canyon or other national parks to secure bonds for capital improvements to the park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

##### THE NATIONAL PARKS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ACT

• Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I introduce legislation to make desperately needed improvements within America's national parks.

The National Parks Capital Improvements Act would allow private fundraising organizations, under agreement with the Secretary of the Interior, to issue taxable capital development bonds to finance park improvement projects. The bonds would be secured by an entrance fee surcharge of up to \$2 per visitor at participating parks.

Our National Park System has enormous capital needs—by last estimate over \$3 billion of high priority projects such as improved transportation systems, trail repairs, visitor facilities, historic preservation, and the list goes on and on. The unfortunate reality is that even under the rosiest budget scenarios our growing park needs far outstrip the resources available.

A good example of this funding gap is at Grand Canyon National Park. The park's newly approved park management plan calls for over \$300 million in capital improvements, including a desperately needed transportation system to reduce congestion. Compare that to the \$12 million the Grand Canyon received last year for operating costs. The gap is as wide as the Grand Canyon itself. Clearly, we must find new means of financing park needs.

Revenue bonding is an integral part of the solution. Based on current visitation rates, a \$2 surcharge at the Grand Canyon would enable us to raise \$100 million dollars from a bond issue amortized over 20 years. That is significant amount of money with which we could accomplish a lot of critical work.

I want to point out that the Grand Canyon would not be the only park eligible for the program. Any park unit with capital needs in excess of \$5 million is eligible to participate. Among eligible park the Secretary will determine which shall take part in the program.

I also want to stress that only projects approved as part of park's General Management Plan can be funded through bond revenue. This proviso eliminates any concern that the revenue could be used for projects of questionable value to the park.