based on an individualized determination and a review of credible evidence that the person should be allowed to carry a handgun because of compelling circumstances warranting an exception. A claim of general or unspecified risks shall not be sufficient to justify an exemption. (C) A person authorized to carry a handgun on his or her person under Federal law."

By Mr. CRAIG:

S. 1981. A bill to establish a Joint United States-Canada Commission on Cattle and Beef to identify, and recommend means of resolving, national, regional, and provincial trade-distorting differences between the countries with respect to the production, processing, and sale of cattle and beef, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

The Joint United States-Canada Commission on Cattle and Beef is designed to resolve some of the existing differences in trade practices between the two countries.

As a former rancher, I have a first-hand understanding of the challenges that face the cattle industry. The prolonged down cycle is especially troubling because it affects the livelihoods of thousands of ranching families in Idaho and across the country.

These beef producers are the largest sector of Idaho and American agriculture. Over 1 million families raise over 100 million head of beef cattle every year. This contributes over $36 billion to local economies. Even with the extended cycle of low prices, direct cash receipts from the Idaho cattle industry were almost $620 million in 1995. These totals only represent direct sales; they do not capture the multiplier effects cattle ranches have on their local economies from expenditures on labor, feed, property taxes, and other inputs.

Over the years, cattle operations have provided a decent living and good way of life in exchange for long days, hard work, and dedication. While the investment continues to be high, the returns have been low in recent years. The problems facing the cattle industry in recent years are complex. The nature of the market dictates that stable consumption combined with increased productivity and growing herd size yield lower prices to producers. This, combined with high feed prices and limited export opportunities, has caused a great deal of difficulty.

Many Idahoans have contacted me on this issue. Some suggest the Federal Government intervene in the market to help producers. However, many others have expressed fear that Federal intervention, if experience is any indication, would complicate matters and may also create a number of unintended results. I tend to agree with the latter. Time and again, I have seen lawmakers and bureaucrats in Washington, DC, albeit well-intentioned, take a difficult situation and make it worse. This does not mean that I believe Government has no role to play. I have supported and will continue to support efforts to improve value. However, I will continue to follow this situation closely with the hope that free market forces will, in the long run, aid in making cattle producers more efficient, productive, and profitable.

The cattle industry is a complex, long-term cycle; however, there are producers who might not survive the short-term consequences. The Beef Industry Assistance Resolution addresses a number of these short term issues. These are issues that were raised at a hearing of the Agriculture Committee that I chaired a few weeks ago.

The resolution has five sections—and directs the Secretary to capture, private sector self-regulation, recognition of barriers to international trade, and emergency loan guarantees. Section 1 encourages the Secretary of Agriculture and Department of Justice to increase monitoring of mergers and acquisitions in the beef industry. Investigation of possible barriers in the beef packing sector for new firms and with other commodities is encouraged. Section 2 directs the Secretary of Agriculture to expedite the reporting of existing beef categories and add additional categories. These categories include contract, formula and live cash cattle prices, and boxed beef prices. The Secretary is also encouraged to increase the frequency of captive supply cattle from every 14 to 7 days. I am especially interested in the improved reporting of all beef and live cattle exports and imports. The second section on the production, processing, and sale of cattle and beef, with particular emphasis on:

* animal health requirements;
* transportation differences;
* the availability of feed grains; and
* other market-distorting direct and indirect subsidies.

Section 3 encourages two very important measures within the private sector. First, meat packing companies are encouraged to fully utilize a grid pricing structure which will provide producers with a more complete picture for the particular type of the cattle they produce. Second, agricultural lenders are encouraged to consider the total asset portfolio, not just cash flow, when evaluating this year's beef loans. Even the best operators will have great difficulty cash-flowing a cattle outfit because of the prolonged period of low prices.

Section 4 recognizes a number of barriers to international trade that adversely affect American beef producers. The section is meant to elevate the importance of all trade issues and specifically references the elimination of the European Union hormone ban and animal health barriers between the United States and Canada.

Section 5 recommends that emergency loan guarantees be made available to agricultural lenders with cattle industry loans. I am disappointed that the President zeroed out funding for this program in his fiscal year 1997 proposal. I have heard from a number of lenders that a high number of loans are questionable for this purpose.

The Beef Industry Assistance Resolution is a measure designed to provide immediate, short-term solutions to some of the serious problems facing the cattle industry. I know that a number of my colleagues have legislation pending in regards to the cattle market. I would comment that I see this resolution as a starting point, not an ending point for cattle industry issues.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of my bill be printed in the Record.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

S. 1981

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. Joint United States-Canada Commission on Cattle and Beef.

(a) Establishment.—There is established a Joint United States-Canada Commission on Cattle and Beef to identify, and recommend means of resolving, national, regional, and provincial trade-distorting differences between the United States and Canada with respect to the production, processing, and sale of cattle and beef.

(b) Composition.—(1) In general.—The Commission shall be composed of—

(A) 3 members representing the United States, including—

(i) 1 member appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate;

(ii) 1 member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

(iii) 1 member appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture;

(B) 3 members representing Canada, appointed by the Government of Canada; and

(C) nonvoting members appointed by the Commission to serve as advisers to the Commission, including university faculty, State veterinarians, trade experts, and other members.

(2) Appointment.—Members of the Commission shall be appointed not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) Report.—Not later than 180 days after the first meeting of the Commission, the Commission shall submit a report to Congress and the Government of Canada that identifies, and recommends means of resolving, differences between the United States and Canada with respect to the production, processing, and sale of cattle and beef.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 673

At the request of Mrs. KASSEBAUM, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania [MR. SPECTER] was added as a cosponsor of S. 673, a bill to establish a youth development and drug prevention grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 1252

At the request of Mr. ABRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma...
AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED

THE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY, WORK OPPORTUNITY, AND MEDICAID RESTRUCTURING ACT OF 1996

FORD AND REID AMENDMENT NO. 4940

Mr. FORD (for himself and Mr. Reid) proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 1566, supra, as follows:

On page 250, line 4, insert "cash" before "assistance".

ASHCROFT AMENDMENT NO. 4941

Mr. ASHCROFT proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 1566, supra, as follows:

Strike section 408(a)(8) of the Social Security Act, as added by section 213(a)(1), and insert the following:

(A) NO ASSISTANCE FOR MORE THAN 5 YEARS FOR FAILURE TO ENSURE MINOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN ARE IN SCHOOL; OR FOR FAILING TO HAVE OR WORK TOWARD A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR ITS EQUIVALENT.

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraphs (B) and (C), a State to which a grant is made under section 403 shall not use any part of the grant to provide assistance—

(I) to a family that includes an adult who has received assistance under any State program funded under this part commences; or

(II) for more than 24 consecutive months after the date the State program funded under this part commences; or

(B) M INOR CHILD EXCEPTION.—In determining the number of months for which an individual who has received assistance under the State program funded under this part for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i), the State shall disregard for 24 consecutive months any month in which assistance was provided with respect to the individual and during which the individual was—

(i) a minor child; and

(ii) not the head of a household or married to the head of a household.

(C) HARDSHIP EXCEPTION.—In general.—The State may exempt a family from the application of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, or subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1), by reason of hardship or if the family includes an individual who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty.

(ii) LIMITATION.—The number of families with respect to which an exemption made by a State under clause (i) is in effect for a fiscal year shall not exceed 20 percent of the average monthly number of families to which assistance is provided under the State program funded under this part.

(iii) BATTERED OR SUBJECT TO EXTREME CRUELTY DEFINED.—For purposes of clause (i), an individual has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty if the individual has been subjected to—

(I) physical acts that resulted in, or threatened to result in, physical injury to the individual;

(II) sexual abuse;

(III) sexual activity involving a dependent child;

(IV) being forced as the caretaker relative of a dependent child to engage in nonconsensual sexual acts or activities;

(V) threats of, or attempts at, physical or sexual abuse;

(VI) mental abuse; or

(VII) neglect or deprivation of medical care assistance.

(D) RULE OF INTERPRETATION.—Subparagraph (A)(i) of this paragraph and subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) shall not be interpreted to require any State to provide assistance to any individual for any period of time under the State program funded under this part.

ASHCROFT AMENDMENT NO. 4942

Mr. ASHCROFT proposed an amendment to amendment No. 4941 proposed by him to the bill, S. 1566, supra, as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the amendment, insert the following:

(8) NO ASSISTANCE FOR MORE THAN 5 YEARS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraphs (B) and (C), a grant is made under section 403 shall not use any part of the grant to provide assistance to a family that includes an adult who has received assistance under any State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government for 60 months (whether or not consecutive) after the date the State program funded under this part commences. However, a State shall not use any part of such grant to provide assistance to a family that includes an adult who has received assistance under any State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government for more than 24 consecutive months unless such an adult is—

(i) engaged in work as required by Section 402(a)(l)(A)(ii); or,

(ii) exempted by the State from such 24 consecutive month limitation by reason of hardship pursuant to subparagraph (C).

(B) M INOR CHILD EXCEPTION.—In determining the number of months for which an individual who has received assistance under the State program funded under this part for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i), the State shall disregard for 24 consecutive months any month in which assistance was provided with respect to the individual and during which the individual was—

(i) engaged in work as required by Section 402(a)(l)(A)(ii); or,

(iii) exempted by the State from such 24 consecutive month limitation by reason of hardship pursuant to subparagraph (C).

(B) M INOR CHILD EXCEPTION.—In determining the number of months for which an individual who has received assistance under the State program funded under this part for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i), the State shall disregard for 24 consecutive months any month in which assistance was provided with respect to the individual and during which the individual was—

(i) engaged in work as required by Section 402(a)(l)(A)(ii); or,

(iii) exempted by the State from such 24 consecutive month limitation by reason of hardship pursuant to subparagraph (C).