

Expedition, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. COATS (for himself, Mr. DODD, Mr. JEFFORDS, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2206. A bill to amend the Head Start Act, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981, and the Community Services Block Grant Act to reauthorize and make improvements to those acts, to establish demonstration projects that provide an opportunity for persons with limited means to accumulate assets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

By Mr. LEAHY:

S. 2207. A bill to amend the Clayton Act to enhance the authority of the Attorney General to prevent certain mergers and acquisitions that would unreasonably limit competition; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FRIST:

2208. A bill to amend title IX for the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the Agency for Healthcare Policy and Research; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. GRAMM (for himself and Mrs. HUTCHISON):

S. Res. 253. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States Department of Agriculture provide timely assistance to Texas farmers and livestock producers who are experiencing worsening drought conditions; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. INOUE, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2202. A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to ensure that all dogs and cats used by research facilities are obtained legally; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

THE PET PROTECTION AND SAFETY ACT OF 1998

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Pet Protection and Safety Act of 1998, a bill to close a serious loophole in the Animal Welfare Act.

Congress passed the Animal Welfare Act over 30 years ago to stop the mistreatment of animals and to prevent the sale of family pets for laboratory experiments. Despite the Animal Welfare Act's well-meaning intentions and the enforcement efforts of the Department of Agriculture, the Act routinely fails to provide pets and pet owners with reliable protection against the actions of USDA-licensed Class B animal dealers, also known as "random source" dealers.

Medical research is an invaluable weapon in the battle against disease. New drugs and surgical techniques offer promise in the fight against AIDS, cancer, and a host of life-threatening diseases. Animal research has

been, and continues to be, fundamental to advancements in medicine. I am not here to argue whether animals should or should not be used in research; rather, I am addressing the unethical practice of selling stolen pets and stray animals to research facilities.

There are less than 40 "random source" animal dealers operating throughout the country who acquire tens of thousands of dogs and cats. Many of these animals are family pets, acquired by so-called "bunchers" who resort to theft and deception as they collect animals and sell them to Class B dealers. "Bunchers" often respond to "free pet to a good home" advertisements, tricking animal owners into giving away their pets by posing as someone interested in adopting the dog or cat. Random source dealers are known to keep hundreds of animals at a time in squalid conditions, providing them with little food or water. The mistreated animals often pass through several hands and across state lines before they are eventually sold by a random source dealer to a research laboratory for \$200 to \$500 each.

Mr. President, the use of animals in research is subject to legitimate criticism because of the fraud, theft, and abuse that I have just described. Dr. Robert Whitney, former director of the Office of Animal Care and Use at the National Institutes of Health echoed this sentiment when he stated, "The continued existence of these virtually unregulatable Class B dealers erodes the public confidence in our commitment to appropriate procurement, care, and use of animals in the important research to better the health of both humans and animals." While I doubt that laboratories intentionally seek out stolen or fraudulently obtained dogs and cats as research subjects, the fact remains that these animals end up in research laboratories—and little is being done to stop it. Mr. President, it is clear to most observers, including animal welfare organizations around the country, that this problem persists because of random source animal dealers.

The Pet Protection and Safety Act strengthens the Animal Welfare Act by prohibiting the use of random source animal dealers as suppliers of dogs and cats to research laboratories. At the same time, The Pet Protection and Safety Act preserves the integrity of animal research by encouraging research laboratories to obtain animals from legitimate sources that comply with the Animal Welfare Act. Legitimate sources are USDA-licensed Class A dealers or breeders; municipal pounds that choose to release dogs and cats for research purposes; legitimate pet owners who want to donate their animals to research; and private and federal facilities that breed their own animals. These four sources are capable of supplying millions of animals for research, far more cats and dogs than are required by current laboratory demand. Furthermore, at least in the case of using municipal pounds, re-

search laboratories could save money since pound animals cost only a few dollars compared to \$200 and \$500 per animal charged by random animal dealers. The National Institutes of Health, in an effort to curb abuse and deception, has already adopted policies against the acquisition of dogs and cats from random source dealers.

The Pet Protection and Safety Act also reduces the Department of Agriculture's regulatory burden by allowing the Department to use its resources more efficiently and effectively. Each year, hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent on regulating 40 random source dealers. To combat any future violations of the Animal Welfare Act, the Pet Protection and Safety Act increases the penalties under the Act to a minimum of \$1,000 per violation. •

By Mr. LEAHY:

S. 2207. A bill to amend the Clayton Act to enhance the authority of the Attorney General to prevent certain mergers and acquisitions that would unreasonably limit competition; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ANTITRUST IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 1998

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I know that consumers are becoming more and more concerned about the merger mania that has hit the United States—they see the potential for higher prices to consumers and poorer service as industries become far more concentrated in fewer hands.

I am also concerned about this trend, particularly when mergers take place between incumbent monopolies. Specifically, the mergers among Regional Bell Operating Companies, which continue to have a virtual stranglehold on the local telephone loop, pose the greatest threat to healthy competition in the telecommunications industry.

Indeed, incumbent telephone companies still control over 99% of the local residential telephone markets. In other words, new entrants have captured less than 1% of local residential phone service.

The Telecommunications Act's promise of competition was a sales pitch that has not materialized to benefit American consumers. Instead of competition, we see entrenchment, megamergers, consolidation and the divvying up of markets. Even Edward Whitacre, Jr., the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of SBC Communications, testified several weeks ago before the Antitrust Subcommittee that "The Act promised competition that has not come."

At a recent judiciary committee hearing on mergers, Alan Greenspan acknowledged that the Act has not lived up to its promises of lower consumer costs and more competition.

Since passage of this law, Southwestern Bell has merged with PacTel into SBC Corporation, and Bell Atlantic has merged with NYNEX. Now, SBC Corporation is seeking to purchase Ameritech. What once had been seven separate local monopolies will soon be