

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. GRAMS:

S. Res. 31. A resolution commending Archbishop Desmond Tutu for being a recipient of the Immortal Chaplains Prize for Humanity; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. SARBANES):

S. 333. A bill to amend the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 to improve the farmland protection program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

FEDERAL AGRICULTURE IMPROVEMENT AND REFORM ACT AMENDMENTS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased to have Senators TORRICELLI, DEWINE, JEFFORDS, KENNEDY, HARKIN, MIKULSKI, LEVIN, KERRY, MURRAY and BOXER join me today to reauthorize a program that has helped hundreds of farmers across the country save their farms and stay in the business of farming. Today, we are introducing a bill to reauthorize the Farmland Protection Program at a funding level of \$55 million a year. This new authorization supports the efforts of President Clinton to restart the program with \$50 million in Fiscal Year 2000.

Since its creation in the 1996 Farm Bill, the Farmland Protection Program has been instrumental in curbing the loss of some of our nation's most productive farmland to urban sprawl. The Farmland Protection Program help shield farmers from development pressures by providing federal matching grants to state and local conservation organizations to purchase easements on farms.

We have all seen the impact of urban sprawl in our home states, whether it be large, multi-tract housing or megamalls that bring national superstores and nation-sized parking lots. We are losing farmland across the country at an alarming rate. This bill will step up our efforts to halt this disturbing trend before too many of America's farms are permanently transformed into asphalt jungles.

In Vermont, we are also seeing the impact of development on our farmland. Increasing land prices and development pressure have forced too many Vermont farmers to sell to developers instead of passing on their farms to the next generation. With the former Farms for the Future program and the Farmland Protection Program, farmers now have a fighting chance against development. Since its inception in Vermont, these programs have helped

conserve 78,000 acres of land on more than 220 Vermont farms.

The success of the program should not just be measured in acres though. The program also has helped farmers expand and re-invest in farm facilities and equipment. Some of the farm projects have also led to construction of affordable housing and preservation of wildlife habitat. There are now success stories all over Vermont. One is the story of Paul and Marian Connor of Bridport, Vermont. Working with the Vermont Land Trust they were able to conserve their 221-acre farm while continuing their dairy operation, raising seven children and retire their mortgage.

Although Vermont is making great progress, across the nation we continue to lose as much as one million acres of prime farmland annually. This land is critically important to agriculture. For example, nearly three-quarters of America's dairy products, fruits and vegetables are grown in counties affected by urban growth.

For American farmers and ranchers, farmland protection is an issue of the survival of both family farms and agricultural regions. When urban pressure pushes up the value of agricultural land above its agricultural value, it threatens the end of family farms because the next generation simply cannot afford to farm land valued at development prices. As some farmers sell their land for development, it places increasing pressure on their neighbors to sell as well.

The 1996 Farm Bill recognized this problem by directly providing \$35 million for farmland protection matching funds that have leveraged million more from local and private programs. The Farmland Protection Program is a model of what new federal conservation programs ought to be, enjoying the unanimous support of the National Governors Association. It preserves the private property rights of farmers.

It offers the Congress a way to demonstrate a realistic and meaningful commitment to the conservation of America's natural heritage without expanding the role of the federal government, and it encourages local communities and states to contribute their own efforts. The program's overwhelming success though has led to increased demand for the program—applicants requested a federal match of more than \$130 million.

Our bill will help address some of this demand and encourage more state governments, local communities and private groups to start new matching programs. This modest federal investment will maintain our commitment to the protection of our rural heritage and working landscape.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. BURNS):

S. 335. A bill to amend chapter 30 of title 39, United States Code, to provide for the nonmailability of certain decep-

tive matter relating to games of chance, administrative procedures, orders, and civil penalties relating to such matter, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

DECEPTIVE MAIL PREVENTION AND ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today, during National Consumer Protection Week, I am introducing the Deceptive Mail Prevention and Enforcement Act, a comprehensive bill designed to stem the rising tide of deceptive mailings that are flooding the mailboxes of the people of Maine and people throughout the country.

I am very pleased to have the cosponsorship of a trio of distinguished Senators in this regard: Senator COCHRAN, the chairman of the subcommittee with legislative jurisdiction over these types of mailings, who has been a leader in the effort to curtail deceptive mailings and sweepstakes fraud; Senator LEVIN, who serves as the ranking minority member of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, and who has played an active role not only in the hearings held last year, but also in introducing his own legislation on this issue, which I am pleased to cosponsor. He has a longstanding interest in curtailing deceptive mailings. I am also pleased to have the support of Senator DURBIN, with whom I have worked very closely on many consumer issues.

Mr. President, several months ago, prompted by complaints that I have received from my constituents in Maine, I initiated an investigation into sweepstakes fraud and deceptive mailings. Over the course of this investigation, I have seen countless examples of mailings that deceptively promise extravagant prizes in order to entice consumers to make unnecessary and unneeded purchases. Unfortunately, this calculated confusion works far too often. In one particularly egregious example, one deceptive mailing prompted some of its victims to fly to Florida, believing that they then would be the first to claim the grand prize promised in a major sweepstakes.

Deceptive mailings take many forms. One such form that I find particularly offensive is "Government look-alike mailings," which appear deceptively like a mailing from a Federal agency or other official entity. An example of such a deceptive mailing was recently sent to me by a woman from Machiasport, ME. The postcard that she received was marked "Urgent Delivery, a Special Notification of Cash Currently Being Held by the U.S. Government is ready for shipment to you." I have blown up a copy of the postcard she received so you can see just how deceptive this mailing was. On the back of the postcard, the consumer was asked to send \$9.97 to learn how to receive this cash. Of course, this was not a legitimate mailing from the Federal