

or similar legislation in order to provide directly needed funding for fire departments; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.

POM-425. A resolution adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders, Cape May County, NJ relative to the disposal of contaminated materials in the Atlantic Ocean at the Mud Dump site; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

POM-426. A resolution adopted by the Council of the City of Cambridge, MA relative to the island of Vieques, PR; to the Committee on Armed Services.

POM-427. A petition from a citizen of the State of Texas relative to amendment of the Constitution; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, without amendment:

S. 1653. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (Rept. No. 106-230).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. BRYAN, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. SARBANES):

S. 2181. A bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act to provide full funding for funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and to provide dedicated funding for other conservation programs, including coastal stewardship, wildlife habitat protection, State and local park and open space preservation, historic preservation, forestry conservation programs, and youth conservation corps; and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 2182. A bill to reduce, suspend, or terminate any assistance under the foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act to each country determined by the President to be engaged in oil price fixing to the detriment of the United States economy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, Ms. SNOWE, and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 2183. A bill to ensure the availability of spectrum to amateur radio operators; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. BRYAN, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. SARBANES):

S. 2181. A bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act to provide full funding for funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and to provide dedicated funding for other conservation programs, including coastal stewardship, wildlife habitat protection, State and local part and open space preservation, historic preservation, forestry conservation programs, and youth conservation corps; and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP ACT

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, today I am pleased to introduce the "Conservation and Stewardship Act," which is cosponsored by Senators HOLLINGS, BAUCUS, KERRY, BOXER, LIEBERMAN, BRYAN, AKAKA, LEAHY, and SARBANES. This comprehensive bill will provide permanent and dedicated funding from Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas revenues to be used for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and many other important conservation programs, including coastal, wildlife habitat, endangered species, historic preservation, State and local park and open space preservation, forestry and farmland conservation, and youth conservation corps programs. While the bill will ensure much-needed funding for many Federal conservation programs, most of the programs included in the bill will assist States, counties, or cities to implement local conservation and recreation projects. In addition, this legislation will, for the first time, fully fund the Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, which provides payments to local governments for the loss of tax revenues resulting from Federal lands in their jurisdiction.

In developing this bill, I have tried to include a variety of programs to ensure that the benefits from OCS revenues—which are a federal resource belonging to all Americans—are equitably distributed throughout the country. While some programs in the bill are of specific interest to coastal States, others will have more application in interior areas; some programs in the bill provide funding for large cities and urban areas, while others are designed to assist rural communities. If we are to succeed in passing a comprehensive conservation bill this year, the benefits must extend to all regions of the country.

In addition, I think it's important to recognize that several very meritorious legislative proposals have already been put forward. One of my goals in developing this bill was to try and incorporate important programs from the other bills, and I am pleased that many of the sponsors of those proposals are also supporting this bill. I also want to recognize the efforts that Senator LANDRIEU, Senator MURKOWSKI, and others have made in generating support for a comprehensive conservation bill with their legislative proposal. While there are differences in our bills

and in some of our funding priorities, I believe our underlying goals are the same. I am committed to working with them, and with all other interested Senators, as we try to pass a bill this year.

I would like to add that my primary goal in introducing this bill is to try and move the legislative process forward in the Senate. I think a consensus approach, such as we are proposing today, is our only chance of getting a bill enacted into law this year.

I know some have questioned why these programs—or any program—should be provided with dedicated funding. When Congress amended the LWCF Act in 1968 to credit a portion of Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas lease revenues into the fund, the premise was that at least some of the revenues from OCS oil and gas production, a non-renewable resource, should be used to protect other resources throughout the country. I think that was a wise concept then, and one we should continue to adhere to today. Along those lines, it is important that whatever programs are included in a comprehensive bill contribute to enriching the natural, cultural, or historical legacy of this country. In my opinion, such a bill is not only justifiable, but necessary if we are going to be responsible to future generations.

Mr. President, I would like to briefly describe some of the major programs that would receive dedicated funding in this bill.

Since its enactment over 35 years ago, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act has been not only one of the most popular conservation measures ever signed into law, but one of the most far-sighted as well. Revenues deposited into the fund are used to protect our national and cultural heritage in our national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, trails, wild and scenic rivers, and other important areas. In addition, the LWCF State grant program assists States in the planning, acquisition, and development of open space and outdoor recreation facilities.

However, over the past 35 years, appropriations from the LWCF have lagged far behind the amounts credited into the fund, even though demand for LWCF funding continues to increase. In fact, on average, less than half of the amounts credited to the fund have actually been authorized. Today, the fund's unappropriated balance exceeds \$13 billion. History has shown that if the LWCF remains subject to the annual appropriations process, the intent of the fund will never be fulfilled. For that reason, my bill uses OCS oil and gas receipts to provide dedicated funding for the LWCF and all of the other conservation programs in the bill. The bill funds the LWCF and its fully authorized level of \$900 million annually, divided equally between the Federal land acquisition and State grant programs.

In addition, I think it's important that the benefits we will get from fully