

S. 2397. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to deny Federal educational assistance funds to local educational agencies that deny the Department of Defense access to secondary school students or directory information about secondary school students for military recruiting purposes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. FITZGERALD (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. SPECTER, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SARBANES, and Mr. KERREY):

S. 2398. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the programs relating to organ procurement and transplantation; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. LEVIN):

S. 2399. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to revise the coverage of immunosuppressive drugs under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ALLARD:

S. 2400. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain water distribution facilities to the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. GREGG (for himself and Mr. KOHL):

S. 2401. A bill to provide jurisdictional standards for imposition of State and local business activity, sales, and use tax obligations on interstate commerce, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CLELAND (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. BINGAMAN):

S. 2402. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance and improve educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill in order to enhance recruitment and retention of members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. GREGG, Mr. KYL, Mr. LEAHY, and Mrs. HUTCHISON):

S. Res. 285. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that there should be parity among the countries that are parties to the North American Free Trade Agreement with respect to the personal exemption allowance for merchandise purchased abroad by returning residents, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CLELAND:

S. Con. Res. 103. A concurrent resolution honoring the members of the Armed Forces and Federal civilian employees who served the Nation during the Vietnam era and the families of those individuals who lost their lives or remain unaccounted for or were injured during that era in Southeast Asia or elsewhere in the world in defense of United States national security interests; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRAHAM:

S. 2383. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide temporary protected status to certain unaccompanied alien children, to provide for the adjustment of status of

aliens unlawfully present in the United States who are under 18 years of age, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ALIEN CHILDREN PROTECTION ACT OF 2000

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, for many weeks, we have been dealing with the tragedy of Elian Gonzalez. If this tragedy teaches us anything, it is that the U.S. immigration laws have not been constructed in a manner that accounts for the special needs of our Nation's most precious resource—I also say our world's most precious resource—our children.

Yesterday, CNN-USA Today released a Gallup Poll on the Elian Gonzalez tragedy. That poll said by a 2-to-1 margin Americans believe Elian Gonzalez should live with his father in Cuba rather than with relatives in the United States. But that same poll, also by a 2-to-1 margin, found that Americans disapprove of the way the Government has handled this case. That disapproval of the way in which the Government has handled this case could be a disapproval of hundreds of cases if they had the same notoriety as Elian.

I come this afternoon to introduce legislation that will require the Federal Government to dramatically improve its treatment of the thousands of unaccompanied children who arrive in the United States each year.

Many of us are parents. I personally have been blessed with four beautiful daughters and 10 wonderful grandchildren. We all know the special joy a child brings to our lives. We know that bond across generations that relationship between a parent or grandparent and a child brings. We all want to pour all of the history, all of our personal experience into safeguarding and into paving the way in the best interests of our children.

The Bible tells us to take this responsibility seriously. In the book of Proverbs, it imparts this wisdom:

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

We all have that responsibility to train up a child.

As that passage from Proverbs suggests, we have a responsibility to protect and nurture all of our children. Their future—our planet's future—depends on it.

Unfortunately, U.S. law prevents us from carrying out that responsibility with respect to some of this planet's most vulnerable children.

Each year, there are about 5,000 unaccompanied children who are detained by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. Some children come to this country seeking asylum, others hope to be reunified with families, and others seek nothing but a better life. While many of these children ultimately are deported or voluntarily returned home, some have legitimate claims which merit our attention.

Regardless of the outcome of their cases, in most instances, these children must endure the rigors of an immigration system that is anything but child

friendly. Unfortunately, many children in INS custody end up spending time in jail-like settings while their cases are pending. They have no one to guide them through complex immigration law and procedure.

Moreover, immigration laws are technical and inflexible and do not permit compassion or frequently even common wisdom to enter into the equation when determining the fate of a child.

I will give some examples. Six Chinese children were detained by the INS last year in Oregon. Though charged with no crime, they were sent to a juvenile detention facility for 8 months where they were exposed to violent youthful offenders who had committed crimes such as murder and drug trafficking. One of the group, a 15-year-old girl, was forced to remain at the jail for several weeks after she had been granted asylum, even though she had relatives living in New York.

Such innocent children should not have to endure exposure to hardened juveniles and criminals as part of their experience with the U.S. immigration process.

Equally compelling is the story of a Kosovar Albanian boy who was suffering from severe depression. He was held in a juvenile correctional facility for over 6 months during his immigration proceedings. The INS provided psychiatric care but by a professional who spoke only English. After a mental episode, the boy was placed in the maximum security section of the jail rather than being provided with appropriate care. The INS even balked at placing the boy in foster care after he was granted asylum, thus further delaying his stay in an inappropriate facility.

The Federal Government's insensitivity to child immigrants is also illustrated by a recent case of two children from the Caribbean. Their mother is a legal, permanent resident in the United States, but she had left her minor children behind with the belief they would soon follow. The mother promptly applied for visas for her children. Yet the children were required to wait in their home country for months and, in some cases, even years before they could even get an interview at the local U.S. Embassy to pave the way for reunification with their mother.

These are just three examples of children who were improperly treated as a result of our current immigration laws. Many of these cases are the result of INS's inherent conflict of interest: Children are detained and frequently deported by the same agency that is responsible for caring for them and protecting their legal rights. This system does not work well enough, and it needs improvement. Children are entitled to receive care from child welfare authorities who will act in their best interest and who are trained to protect children's rights.

Indeed, there is an irony. The Federal Government requires States to place