

S. 337. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to revise the age and service requirements for eligibility to receive retired pay for non-regular service, to expand certain authorities to provide health care benefits for Reserves and their families, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SMITH (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. KERRY, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CHAFEE, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. CORZINE, and Mr. COLEMAN):

S. 338. A bill to provide for the establishment of a Bipartisan Commission on Medicaid; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, and Mr. ENSIGN):

S. 339. A bill to reaffirm the authority of States to regulate certain hunting and fishing activities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LUGAR:

S. 340. A bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 5

At the request of Mr. ALLEN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 5, a bill to amend the procedures that apply to consideration of interstate class actions to assure fairer outcomes for class members and defendants, and for other purposes.

S. 33

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 33, a bill to prohibit energy market manipulation.

S. 98

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 98, a bill to amend the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 and the Revised Statutes of the United States to prohibit financial holding companies and national banks from engaging, directly or indirectly, in real estate brokerage or real estate management activities, and for other purposes.

S. 103

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 103, a bill to respond to the illegal production, distribution, and use of methamphetamine in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 119

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 119, a bill to provide for the protection of unaccompanied alien children, and for other purposes.

S. 185

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added

as a cosponsor of S. 185, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for the reduction of certain Survivor Benefit Plan annuities by the amount of dependency and indemnity compensation and to modify the effective date for paid-up coverage under the Survivor Benefit Plan.

S. 193

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 193, a bill to increase the penalties for violations by television and radio broadcasters of the prohibitions against transmission of obscene, indecent, and profane language.

S. 217

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 217, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to preserve the essential air service program.

S. 241

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) were added as cosponsors of S. 241, a bill to amend section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934 to provide that funds received as universal service contributions and the universal service support programs established pursuant to that section are not subject to certain provisions of title 31, United States Code, commonly known as the Antideficiency Act.

S. 249

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 249, a bill to establish the Great Basin National Heritage Route in the States of Nevada and Utah.

S. 263

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 263, a bill to provide for the protection of paleontological resources on Federal lands, and for other purposes.

S. 285

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 285, a bill to reauthorize the Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education Program.

S. 291

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 291, a bill to require the withholding of United States contributions to the United Nations until the President certifies that the United Nations is cooperating in the investigation of the United Nations Oil-for-Food Program.

S. 317

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 317, a bill to protect privacy by limiting the access of the Government to library, bookseller, and other personal records for foreign intelligence and counterintelligence purposes.

S. RES. 8

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 8, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the maximum amount of a Federal Pell Grant.

S. RES. 37

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 37, a resolution designating the week of February 7 through February 11, 2005, as "National School Counseling Week".

S. RES. 40

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 40, a resolution supporting the goals and ideas of National Time Out Day to promote the adoption of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations' universal protocol for preventing errors in the operating room.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2 proposed to S. 5, a bill to amend the procedures that apply to consideration of interstate class actions to assure fairer outcomes for class members and defendants, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. DAYTON, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 324. A bill to provide additional protections for recipients of the earned income tax credit; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Taxpayer Abuse Prevention Act. Earned income tax credit, EITC, benefits intended for working families are significantly reduced by the use of refund anticipation loans, RALs, which typically carry triple digit interest rates.

According to the Brookings Institution, an estimated \$1.9 billion intended to assist low-income families was received by commercial tax preparers and affiliated national banks to pay for tax assistance, electronic filing of returns, and high-cost refund loans in 2002. Fifty-seven percent of consumers who received RALs in 2003 earned the EITC. The Children's Defense Fund recently conducted a review of EITC refunds in eight states and the District of Columbia. In Texas, it is estimated that EITC families lost an estimated \$251 million in tax preparation fees and high interest loans. EITC families had an estimated \$82.6 million diverted to tax preparers in Ohio.