

EC-6091. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District" (FRL No. 8046-6) received on March 27, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6092. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the Nevada State Implementation Plan" (FRL No. 8045-9) received on March 27, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6093. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rulemaking on Section 126 Petition from North Carolina to Reduce Interstate Transport of Fine Particulate Matter and Ozone; Federal Implementation Plans to Reduce Interstate Transport of Fine Particulate Matter and Ozone; Revisions to the Clean Air Interstate Rule; Revisions to the Acid Rain Program" (FRL No. 8047-5) received on March 27, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6094. A communication from the Acting Chair, Federal Subsistence Board, Fish and Wildlife Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska, Subpart C and D—2006-2007 Subsistence Taking of Fish and Shellfish Regulations" (RIN1018-AU05) received on March 27, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6095. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Fish and Wildlife Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for the Kootenai River Population of the White Sturgeon" (RIN1018-AU47) received on March 27, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6096. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Fish and Wildlife Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for *Brodiaea filifolia*" (RIN1018-AT75) received on March 27, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6097. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Fish and Wildlife Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for *Atriplex coronata* var. *notator* (San Jacinto Valley crownscale)" (RIN1018-AJ11) received on March 27, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. STEVENS, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 1102. A bill to extend the aviation war risk insurance program for 3 years (Rept. No. 109-223).

By Mr. STEVENS, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation,

with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1215. A bill to authorize the acquisition of interests in underdeveloped coastal areas in order better to ensure their protection from development (Rept. No. 109-224).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of committee were submitted:

By Mr. LUGAR, from the Committee on Foreign Relations:

[Treaty Doc. 109-5 Tax Convention with Bangladesh (Ex. Rept. 109-10)]

[Treaty Doc. 109-7 Protocol Amending Tax Convention on Inheritances with France (Ex. Rept. 109-11)]

[Treaty Doc. 109-8 Protocol Amending the Convention with Sweden on Taxes on Income (Ex. Rept. 109-12)]

[Treaty Doc. 109-4 Protocol Amending the Tax Convention with France (Ex. Rept. 109-9)]

The text of the committee-recommended resolutions of advice and consent to ratification are as follows:

109-4: PROTOCOL AMENDING THE TAX CONVENTION WITH FRANCE

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

That the Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed at Paris on August 31, 1994.

109-5: TAX CONVENTION WITH BANGLADESH

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

That the Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Bangladesh for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income signed at Dhaka on September 26, 2004 with an exchange of notes enclosed.

109-7: PROTOCOL AMENDING TAX CONVENTION ON INHERITANCES WITH FRANCE

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

That the Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention Between the United States of America and the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Estates, Inheritances, and Gifts signed at Washington on November 24, 1978.

109-8: PROTOCOL AMENDING THE CONVENTION WITH SWEDEN ON TAXES ON INCOME

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

That the Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Sweden for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income signed at Washington on September 30, 2005.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first

and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 2456. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Crotonaldehyde; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. SNOWE:

S. 2457. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to provide incentives for supplying health insurance to employees of small employers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. STABENOW:

S. 2458. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage college savings by providing a Federal income tax credit to match contributions to Coverdell education savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. COLEMAN, and Mr. LIEBERMAN):

S. 2459. A bill to improve cargo security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 2460. A bill to permit access to certain information in the Firearms Trace System database; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. HAGEL (for himself, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BURNS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. REED, Mr. REID, and Ms. SNOWE):

S. Res. 405. A resolution designating August 16, 2006, as "National Airborne Day"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FRIST (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. Res. 406. A resolution congratulating Graceland on the occasion of its designation as a National Historic Landmark; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 48

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 48, a bill to reauthorize appropriations for the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route, and for other purposes.

S. 211

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 211, a bill to facilitate nationwide availability of 2-1-1 telephone service for information and referral on human services, volunteer services, and for other purposes.

S. 237

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 237, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to ensure that certain states remain eligible for Federal highway funds.

S. 368

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 368, a bill to provide assistance to reduce teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases and to support healthy adolescent development.

S. 418

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 418, a bill to protect members of the Armed Forces from unscrupulous practices regarding sales of insurance, financial, and investment products.

S. 424

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 424, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for arthritis research and public health, and for other purposes.

S. 440

At the request of Mr. BUNNING, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 440, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to include podiatrists as physicians for purposes of covering physicians services under the medicaid program.

S. 484

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 484, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Federal civilian and military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pretax basis and to allow a deduction for TRICARE supplemental premiums.

S. 495

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 495, a bill to impose sanctions against perpetrators of crimes against humanity in Darfur, Sudan, and for other purposes.

S. 619

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 619, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to combat autism through research, screening, intervention and education.

S. 1033

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. CHAFEE) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1033, a bill to improve border security and immigration.

S. 1086

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Alabama

(Mr. SESSIONS) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1086, a bill to improve the national program to register and monitor individuals who commit crimes against children or sex offenses.

S. 1112

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1112, a bill to make permanent the enhanced educational savings provisions for qualified tuition programs enacted as part of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001.

S. 1116

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1116, a bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to provide for mental health screening and treatment services, to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for integration of mental health services and mental health treatment outreach teams, and for other purposes.

S. 1221

At the request of Mr. DAYTON, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1221, a bill to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to create a presumption that a disability or death of a Federal employee in fire protection activities caused by any of certain diseases is the result of the performance of such employee's duty.

S. 1343

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1343, a bill to support the establishment or expansion and operation of programs using a network of public and private community entities to provide mentoring for children in foster care.

S. 1488

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1488, a bill to withhold funding from the United Nations if the United Nations abridges the rights provided by the Second Amendment to the Constitution, and for other purposes.

S. 1864

At the request of Mr. TALENT, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1864, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain farming business machinery and equipment as 5-year property for purposes of depreciation.

S. 1899

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1899, a bill to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act to identify and remove barriers to reducing child abuse, to provide for examinations of certain children, and for other purposes.

S. 1930

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1930, a bill to expand the research, prevention, and awareness activities of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with respect to inflammatory bowel disease.

S. 1948

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1948, a bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations to reduce the incidence of child injury and death occurring inside or outside of passenger motor vehicles, and for other purposes.

S. 1955

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1955, a bill to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Security Act of 1974 and the Public Health Service Act to expand health care access and reduce costs through the creation of small business health plans and through modernization of the health insurance marketplace.

S. 2008

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2008, a bill to improve cargo security, and for other purposes.

S. 2010

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) were added as cosponsors of S. 2010, a bill to amend the Social Security Act to enhance the Social Security of the Nation by ensuring adequate public-private infrastructure and to resolve to prevent, detect, treat, intervene in, and prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and for other purposes.

S. 2025

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2025, a bill to promote the national security and stability of the United States economy by reducing the dependence of the United States on oil through the use of alternative fuels and new technology, and for other purposes.

S. 2087

At the request of Mr. CHAMBLISS, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2087, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for the employment of foreign agricultural workers, and for other purposes.

S. 2201

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2201, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to modify the mediation and implementation requirements of section 40122 regarding

changes in the Federal Aviation Administration personnel management system, and for other purposes.

S. 2276

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2276, a bill to provide for fairness for the Federal judiciary.

S. 2284

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2284, a bill to extend the termination date for the exemption of returning workers from the numerical limitations for temporary workers.

S. 2321

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2321, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of Louis Braille.

S. 2322

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2322, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to make the provision of technical services for medical imaging examinations and radiation therapy treatments safer, more accurate, and less costly.

S. 2339

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2339, a bill to reauthorize the HIV Health Care Services Program under title 26 of the Public Health Service Act.

S. 2370

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWBACK), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2370, a bill to promote the development of democratic institutions in areas under the administrative control of the Palestinian Authority, and for other purposes.

S. 2382

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2382, a bill to establish a national health program administered by the Office of Personnel Management to offer health benefits plans to individuals who are not Federal employees, and for other purposes.

S. 2390

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2390, a bill to provide a national innovation initiative.

S. 2400

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2400, a bill to transfer authority to review certain mergers, acquisitions, and takeovers of United States entities by foreign entities to a designee established within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

S. 2414

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2414, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require broker reporting of customer's basis in securities transactions, and for other purposes.

S. 2429

At the request of Mr. BROWBACK, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2429, a bill to authorize the President to waive the application of certain requirements under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 with respect to India.

S. 2450

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2450, a bill to strengthen national security by encouraging and assisting in the expansion and improvement of educational programs in order to meet critical needs at the elementary, secondary, and higher education levels, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. SNOWE:

S. 2457. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to provide incentives for supplying health insurance to employees of small employers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise to introduce legislation that would address the crisis that faces small businesses when it comes to purchasing quality, affordable health insurance. This isn't a new crisis. Nearly 46 million Americans are uninsured, and we've now experienced double digit percentage increases in health insurance premiums in four of the past five years.

Last year, I introduced the Small Business Health Fairness Act, S. 406, which would allow small businesses to pool together, through national Association Health Plans, also known as Small Business Health Plans, SBHPs, to offer uniform health insurance products to their employees. Small businesses would receive the same benefits currently enjoyed by larger employers and union plans under Federal law.

I am encouraged by the considerable progress that has been made on SBHPs in this Senate. I would like to commend Senator MIKE ENZI for his continuing commitment to the SBHP issue, and for marking-up SBHP legislation in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. Plain and

simple, the Senate must take up—and pass—SBHP legislation to provide small businesses with much-needed, long-awaited relief.

While I continue to believe that SBHPs are a crucial solution to the small business health insurance crisis, we in Congress must look for other means by which to encourage small businesses to offer health insurance. I believe that we should do this by: 1. providing targeted tax incentives that encourage the smallest businesses to offer health insurance; and 2. using the tax code to inject much-needed competition in dysfunctional State small group markets.

The Small Business Health Insurance Relief Act of 2006 would achieve both of these objectives. First, I propose a targeted tax credit that would encourage our Nation's smallest businesses to offer health insurance as a workplace benefit.

Study after study tells us that the smallest businesses are the ones least likely to offer insurance and most in need of assistance. According to the Employee Benefit Research Institute, of the working uninsured, who make up 83 percent of our Nation's uninsured population, 60.6 percent either work for a small business with fewer than 100 employees or are self-employed.

Small businesses in my own State of Maine have it particularly bad. Last summer, the Maine Center for Economic Policy, MECEP, reported a 15 percent average premium increase for small businesses in Maine over the past three years. The MECEP report also highlighted several other alarming trends: Half of the small businesses surveyed raised deductibles over the past three years. Over one quarter have either increased co-payments or reduced coverage, or have delayed pay raises to cover increased costs. Eight percent of Maine's small businesses have dropped health coverage entirely.

Furthermore, coverage trends for small businesses are getting worse, not better. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation's Employer Health Benefits 2005 Annual Survey: only 47 percent of the smallest employers, those with 3 to 9 workers, now offer health insurance as a workplace benefit. This is down from 52 percent in 2004, and 58 percent in 2002. In sharp contrast, 98 percent of larger businesses, those with 200 or more workers, offer health insurance as a benefit.

The targeted tax incentives in my bill would help ensure that our Nation's smallest businesses can offer health insurance—in the same way that larger businesses currently do. My legislation targets small businesses with 50 or fewer employees because these are the small businesses most desperately in need. The maximum tax credit under the proposal would be \$1,500 for single coverage and \$3,000 for family coverage. The tax credit would phase out as a business increases in size. Notably, my proposal is neutral between types of insurance: small businesses and their employees can choose