

SENATE RESOLUTION 470—PRO-
MOTING A COMPREHENSIVE PO-
LITICAL AGREEMENT IN IRAQ

Mr. KERRY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 470

Whereas Iraq is destabilized by an ongoing insurgency and increasing sectarian violence;

Whereas General John P. Abizaid, the head of the United States Central Command, said in March 2006 that "sectarian violence is a greater concern for us security-wise right now than the insurgency";

Whereas General George Casey, the senior United States military commander in Iraq, and Zalmay Khalilzad, the United States Ambassador to Iraq, have stated that "the principal threat to stability is shifting from an insurgency grounded in rejection of the new political order to sectarian violence grounded in mutual fears and recriminations";

Whereas a national unity government and a comprehensive political agreement among Shias, Sunnis, and Kurds are essential to end sectarian violence, undermine the insurgency, and bring stability to Iraq;

Whereas, on April 22, 2006, the Iraqi National Assembly approved senior leaders of a national unity government, including Jawad al-Mailiki as Prime Minister;

Whereas, under the constitution of Iraq, the Prime Minister has 30 days to form a government;

Whereas a comprehensive political agreement that will resolve fundamental issues dividing Iraqis and undermining stability, including federalism, oil revenues, the militias, security guarantees, reconstruction, and border security;

Whereas reaching a comprehensive agreement that will help bring stability to Iraq is in the best interests of Iraq's neighbors, the region, and the international community;

Whereas Iraq's neighbors, representatives of the Arab League, and the international community as represented by NATO, the European Union, and the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council can assist in the process of bringing about such a comprehensive agreement; and

Whereas the President should expedite this process by bringing together these parties and the leaders of the new Government of Iraq: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the President, not later than 30 days after the date of the formation of a new national unity government in Iraq, should convene a summit that includes the leaders of that government, leaders of the governments of each country bordering Iraq, representatives of the Arab League, the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, representatives of the European Union, and leaders of the governments of each permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, for the purpose of reaching a comprehensive political agreement for Iraq that addresses fundamental issues including federalism, oil revenues, the militias, security guarantees, reconstruction, economic assistance, and border security.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS/MEETINGS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The hearing will be held on May 15, 2006 at 2:30 p.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony relating to implementation of the Energy Policy Act of 2005's electricity reliability provisions.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send two copies of their testimony to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150.

For further information, please contact Kellie Donnelly at (202) 224-9360 or Shannon Ewan at (202) 224-7555.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been rescheduled before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The hearing originally scheduled for Thursday, May 11, 2006 at 10 a.m. in Room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building will now be held on Tuesday, May 16, 2006 at 10 a.m. in the same room.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony regarding the status of the Yucca Mountain Repository Project within the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management at the Department of Energy.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send two copies of their testimony to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150.

For further information, please contact Clint Williamson at (202) 224-7556 or Steve Waskiewicz at (202) 228-6195.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO
MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, May 8, at 3 p.m. The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony regarding issues associated with the implementation of the provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 addressing licensing of hydroelectric facilities.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet on Mon-

day, May 8, 2006, at 3:30 p.m. to consider the nomination of David L. Norquist to be Chief Financial Officer at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFFIRMING THAT STATEMENTS
OF NATIONAL UNITY SHOULD BE
IN ENGLISH

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 458.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 458) affirming that statements of national unity, including the National Anthem, should be recited or sung in English.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today I rise to oppose a resolution stating that it is the Sense of the Senate that statements of national unity, including the National Anthem, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Oath of Allegiance sworn by new U.S. citizens should be recited or sung in English.

I agree with my colleagues that English is the common language of the United States and I join with them in urging all people who come to the U.S. and those who want to become U.S. citizens to learn the English language and understand our culture. Conversely, I believe the U.S. would benefit if its citizens knew the languages and cultures of other nations. We must develop long-term relationships with people throughout the world and learn to speak other languages, whether or not the languages spoken are considered critical for a particular situation or emergency. As 9/11 showed us, the failures of communication can do swift damage.

S. Res. 458 acknowledges that the vast majority of Americans are immigrants or descendants of immigrants, and that millions of Americans speak or study other languages. It further states that despite the linguistic and historic cultural diversity of the nation we are all Americans and our common language is English. However, even though English is our common language, the State Department offers translations of the National Anthem, the U.S. Constitution, the Pledge of Allegiance, and other U.S. documents in French, Arabic, and other foreign languages on its Web site to help people better understand America. Nor did President Bush refrain from singing the National Anthem in Spanish when he was running for office in 2000 or prevent pop star Jon Secada from singing our anthem in both English and Spanish when entertaining the President in 2001.