

changes are not discriminatory before they may legally take effect;

Sections 6-9: The Federal Examiner/Observer provisions, which set forth criteria for election monitoring by the Department of Justice; and

Section 203: The bilingual voting materials provisions, which mandate that certain voting materials must be translated for language minorities in certain jurisdictions; and

Whereas, by 2007, Congress will vote on whether to extend these "special provisions" of the Voting Rights Act; the effects of the long history of voting discrimination persist; the "special provisions" of the Voting Rights Act continue to be extremely important tools for protecting minority voting; during the reauthorization process, Congress will compile a record that sets forth the continuing effects of the nation's widespread voting discrimination; and

Whereas, voting is the cornerstone of American democracy and, during the reauthorization process, Congress and individuals and organizations concerned with maintaining the protections afforded by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 will have an opportunity to present the evidence necessary to support renewal of the "special provisions" of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; in the meantime, all eligible voters should register, confirm their registration status, and exercise the right to vote so that the long struggle to expand the franchise yields meaningful results: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate of the 104th General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, the House of Representatives concurring, That we hereby urge Congress to reauthorize the "special provisions" of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee will collaborate with all organizations dedicated to ensuring the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and be it further*

*Resolved, That an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Speaker and the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President and the Secretary of the U.S. Senate, and each member of the Tennessee Congressional Delegation.*

POM-417. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Legislature of the State of Texas relative to memorializing the Congress of the United States to address problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs concerning the provision of health care and benefits, the adjudication of claims, accountability, and outreach and to enact legislation that creates an appropriation formula that ensures predictable and adequate funding for the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 9

Whereas, military veterans who have served their country honorably and who were promised and have earned health care and benefits from the federal government through the Department of Veterans Affairs are now in need of these benefit; and

Whereas, the funding of the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs has failed to reflect the admission of newly eligible veterans in the wake of the Veterans' Health Care Eligibility Reform Act of 1996 and has fallen short of the amount needed to counter soaring medical care inflation, resulting in a funding shortfall of at least \$10 billion; and

Whereas, the current discretionary method of funding the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration is uncertain

and is subject annually to the whim and competing priorities of congress, to the detriment of the veterans being served; and

Whereas, the Vietnam Veterans of America organization supports the adoption of a new funding mechanism for the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration that is indexed to medical inflation and the per capita use of the administration's health care system; and

Whereas, the substantial delay in adjudicating veterans' claims for service-connected disability compensation is the cause of much anguish and anger among veterans and is the result of a lack of funding of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, which has led to an insufficient number of adjudicators and the inadequate training and supervision of adjudicators; and

Whereas, while the vast majority of Department of Veterans Affairs employees are dedicated to serving veterans, it is necessary to ensure that employee accountability standards be strengthened at senior and junior levels; and

Whereas, while more than five million veterans use the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs for their health care needs, tens of thousands more are eligible for benefits of which they are unaware due, to inadequate outreach efforts by the department: Now, therefore be it

*Resolved, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to address problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs related to the provision of health care and benefits, the adjudication of claims, accountability, and outreach and to enact legislation that creates an appropriation formula that ensures predictable and adequate funding of the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the secretary of the senate forward official copies of this Resolution to the secretary of veterans affairs, the president of the United States, the president of the senate and speaker of the house of representatives of the United States Congress, and all members of the Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this Resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.*

POM-418. A resolution adopted by the Cook County Board of Commissioners of the State of Illinois relative to extending or making permanent all sections of the Voting Right Act of 1965; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BOND, from the Committee on Appropriations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

H.R. 5576. A bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, Treasury, and Housing and Urban Development, the Judiciary, District of Columbia, and independent agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 109-293).

By Mr. McCAIN, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 3526. A bill to amend the Indian Land Consolidation Act to modify certain requirements under that Act (Rept. No. 109-294).

By Mr. SPECTER, from the Committee on the Judiciary:

Report to accompany S. 2703, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Rept. No. 109-295).

#### 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. SPECTER:

S. 3731. A bill to regulate the judicial use of presidential signing statements in the interpretation of Acts of Congress; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PRYOR:

S. 3732. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain liquid crystal divide (LCD) flat panel displays; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PRYOR:

S. 3733. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain plasma flat panel displays; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 3734. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to allow a judge to whom a case is transferred to retain jurisdiction over certain multidistrict litigation cases for trial, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BAUCUS:

S. 3735. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on vulcanized rubber felt bottom boots for use in waders; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BAUCUS:

S. 3736. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on vulcanized rubber lug bottom boots for use in fishing waders; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. REED, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. DODD, and Mr. CHAFFEE):

S. 3737. A bill to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Washington-Rochambeau Route National Historic Trail; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 3738. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional standard deduction for real property taxes for nonitemizers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COLEMAN (for himself, Mr. REED, Mr. KOHL, and Mr. MARTINEZ):

S. 3739. A bill to establish a Consortium on the Impact of Technology in Aging Health Services; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. FEINGOLD:

S. 3740. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LUGAR (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 3741. A bill to provide funding authority to facilitate the evacuation of persons from Lebanon, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

By Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. SMITH, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. INOUE, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 3742. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives to encourage investment in the expansion of freight rail infrastructure capacity and to enhance modal tax equity; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. ALLEN):

S. 3743. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve newborn screening