

Security benefits and eliminate wasteful spending, such as spending on unnecessary tax loopholes, in order to fully offset the cost of such repeal and avoid forcing taxpayers to pay substantially more interest to foreign creditors.

SA 208. Mr. NELSON of Nebraska submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

SEC. ____ . DISABILITY PREFERENCE PROGRAM FOR TAX COLLECTION CONTRACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6306 (relating to qualified tax collection contracts) is amended—

(1) by striking “Nothing” in subsection (a) and inserting “Except as provided in subsection (c), nothing”;

(2) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), (e), and (f) as subsections (d), (e), (f), and (g), respectively, and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

“(c) DISABILITY PREFERENCE PROGRAM FOR TAX COLLECTION CONTRACTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide a qualifying disability preference to any program under which any qualified tax collection contract is awarded on or after the effective date of this subsection and shall ensure compliance with the requirements of paragraph (3).

“(2) QUALIFYING DISABILITY PREFERENCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘qualifying disability preference’ means a preference pursuant to which at least 10 percent (in both number and aggregate dollar amount) of the accounts covered by qualified tax collection contracts are awarded to persons satisfying the following criteria:

“(i) Such person employs within the United States at least 50 severely disabled individuals.

“(ii) Such person shall agree as an enforceable condition of its bid for a qualified tax collection contract that within 90 days after the date such contract is awarded, not less than 35 percent of the employees of such person employed in connection with providing services under such contract shall—

“(I) be hired after the date such contract is awarded, and

“(II) be severely disabled individuals.

“(B) DETERMINATION OF SATISFACTION OF CRITERIA.—Within 60 days after the end of the period specified in subparagraph (A)(ii), the Secretary shall determine whether such person has met the 35 percent requirement specified in such subparagraph, and if such requirement has not been met, shall terminate the contract for nonperformance. For purposes of determining whether such 35 percent requirement has been satisfied, severely disabled individuals providing services under such contract shall not include any severely disabled individuals who were counted toward satisfaction of the 50-employee requirement specified in subparagraph (A)(i), unless such person replaced such individuals by hiring additional severely disabled individuals who do not perform services under such contract.

“(3) PROGRAM-WIDE EMPLOYMENT OF SEVERELY DISABLED INDIVIDUALS.—Not less than 15 percent of all individuals hired by all persons to whom tax collection contracts are issued by the Secretary under this section,

to perform work under such tax collection contracts, shall qualify as severely disabled individuals.

“(4) SEVERELY DISABLED INDIVIDUAL.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘severely disabled individual’ means any one of the following:

“(A) Any veteran of the United States Armed Forces with—

“(i) a disability determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to be service-connected, or

“(ii) a disability deemed by statute to be service-connected.

“(B) Any individual who is a disabled beneficiary (as defined in section 1148(k)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b–19(k)(2))) or who would be considered to be such a disabled beneficiary but for having income or assets in excess of the income or asset eligibility limits established under title II or XVI of the Social Security Act, respectively.”

(b) REPORT BY GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of private contractors for Internal Revenue Service debt collection. The study required by this paragraph shall be completed in time to be taken into account by Congress before any new contracting is carried out under section 6306 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 in years following 2008.

(2) STUDY OF COMPARABLE EFFORTS.—As part of the study required under paragraph (1), the Comptroller General shall—

(A) make every effort to determine the relative effectiveness and efficiency of debt collection contracting by Federal staff compared to private contractors, using a cost calculation for both Federal staff and private contractors which includes all benefits and overhead costs,

(B) compare the cost effectiveness of the contracting approach of the Department of the Treasury to that of the Department of Education’s Office of Student Financial Assistance, and

(C) survey State tax debt collection experiences for lessons that may be applicable to the Internal Revenue Service collection efforts.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to any tax collection contract awarded on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS/MEETINGS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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

The hearing will be held on Thursday, February 1, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD-G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this hearing is to examine accelerated biofuels diversity, focusing on how home-grown, biologically derived fuels can blend into the Nation’s transportation fuel mix.

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 Tara Billingsley at (202) 224-4756 or David Marks at (202) 224-8046.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to receive testimony on the current situation in Iraq on the Administration’s recently announced strategy for continued United States assistance to the Iraqi Government and for an increased United States military presence in Iraq.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 25, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., to vote on committee organizational matters for the 110th Congress; immediately following the executive session the committee will meet to conduct a hearing on “Examining the Billing, Marketing, and Disclosure Practices of the Credit Card Industry, and Their Impact on Consumers.”

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on oil and gas resources on the Outer Continental Shelf and areas available for leasing in the Gulf of Mexico.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 9:15 a.m. to hold a hearing on Iraq.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a hearing on Iraq.

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