

INITIAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
RELATIVE TO THE IRAQI BENCHMARKS—PM 20

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 1314 of the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (Public Law 110-28) (the "Act"), attached is the report that assesses the status of each of the 18 Iraqi benchmarks contained in the Act and declares whether satisfactory progress toward meeting these benchmarks is, or is not, being achieved.

This report has been prepared in consultation with the Secretaries of State and Defense; Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq; the United States Ambassador to Iraq; and the Commander of United States Central Command.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, July 12, 2007.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER
COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2558. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting the report of a draft bill entitled, "Preserve America and Save America's Treasures Act"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2559. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a flood damage reduction project for the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, Des Moines, Iowa; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2560. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Partial Termination and Turnover Rate" (Rev. Rul. 2007-43) received on July 11, 2007; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2561. A communication from the Director, Office of Labor-Management Standards, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Labor Organization Officer and Employee Report, Form LM-30" (RIN1215-AB49) received on July 11, 2007; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2562. A communication from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 17-70, "Safe and Stable Homes for Children and Youth Amendment Act of 2007" received on July 11, 2007; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-148. A resolution adopted by the City Council for the City of Okeechobee of the State of Florida urging Congress to appropriate the funds necessary to bring the Herbert Hoover Dike into compliance with current levee safety standards; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

POM-149. A resolution adopted by the Council of the City of North Miami of the State of Florida urging Congress to appropriate the funds necessary to bring the Herbert Hoover dike into compliance with current levee protection safety standards; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

POM-150. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Utah expressing opposition to the Divine Strake explosive test that is to be conducted in Nevada in 2007; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Whereas, "Divine Strake" is the code name for a large high-explosive test to be conducted by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency;

Whereas, the Pentagon has stated the purpose of the test is to "determine the potential for future non-nuclear concepts," such as high-energy weapons or the simultaneous use of multiple conventional bombs to destroy deeply buried and fortified military targets, as an alternative to detonating a nuclear device;

Whereas, the test was originally planned to take place June 2, 2006 at the site of an existing underground tunnel in the United States Department of Energy Nevada Test Site, but was postponed several times due to legal action, then later delayed until 2007;

Whereas, the test is scheduled to utilize 700 tons of an ammonium nitrate combined with fuel oil explosive, which is equivalent to 593 tons of TNT;

Whereas, there is concern that the explosion could stir up nuclear particles, left from previous tests conducted decades earlier at the Nevada test site, into the atmosphere;

Whereas, in December 2006, the revision to the Environmental Assessment was released, and although the study concluded that there are no health risks to persons outside the blast area, it stated, "Since suspended natural radionuclides and resuspended fallout radionuclides from the detonation have potential to be transported off of the NTS by wind, they may contribute a radiological dose to the public";

Whereas, on January 22, 2006, the Washington County Commission issued a statement opposing the federal government's plan to conduct the test which reads in part, "The City of St. George has a unique history due to its proximity to the Nevada Nuclear Test Site during the atomic age. . . thousands of early deaths of those living in southern Utah and the surrounding areas have been attributed to nuclear testing during the 1950s and 1960s at the site. Many St. George residents and others have suffered incalculable loss as a result of radioactive fallout exposure from the detonations at the site";

Whereas, the Commission added, "To assure the safety and well-being of our citizenry, these concerns must be carefully studied and evaluated before a decision is made to proceed with the proposed detonation"; and

Whereas, much more needs to be done to assure that there is never a repeat of the immense suffering endured by citizens of Utah and nearby states due to the nuclear fallout from past tests at the Nevada Test Site. Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein, express opposition to the Divine Strake high-explosive test to be conducted by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency at the

United States Department of Energy Nevada Test Site in 2007. Be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be sent to the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the United States Department of Defense, the United States Department of Energy Nevada Test Site, the Washington County Commission, and to the members of Utah's congressional delegation.

POM-151. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan urging Congress to enact H.R. 1619 or S. 587 to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins to commemorate the Ford Model T; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 78

Whereas, Michigan's integral role as the heart of the automobile industry in our country and around the world is well established. Nearly 100 years ago, an especially meaningful chapter in this long history began with the opening of the Highland Park Ford Plant that is acknowledged to be the birthplace of the assembly line. In addition, the more than 15 million Model T Fords that were built between 1908 and 1927 reshaped the American landscape and our way of life; and

Whereas, The new age in manufacturing that was born in Michigan and the Model T Ford set in motion changes in how Americans live and how people travel around the world. The rise in the American middle class, the ability to prevail in defense of our nation in world wars, and subsequent technological advances all can be traced in significant measure to the automobile industry that began with the vision and hard work of the pioneer mechanics in Michigan; and

Whereas, Congress has before it legislation that would require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint not more than 500,000 coins to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Model T Ford automobile. Under this legislation, these dollar coins, which would be public tender, would be comprised of 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper. The legislation also provides that the money raised by a surcharge above the face value would be distributed to the Motor Cities National Heritage Area through the Automobile National Heritage Partnership and to the Edison Institute. This money would create endowments to support the celebration of the Model T and the preservation of its story through educational programs and displays; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact H.R. 1619 or S. 587, to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Model T Ford; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-152. A joint resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Tennessee urging Congress to address the economic impact of interchange fees and merchant discount charges and develop clear and concise disclosure to consumers and retailers; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 361

Whereas, consumers are increasingly using credit and debit cards and other electronic transactions to make purchases, and the number of credit and debit card transactions each year now exceeds the number of check transactions; and

Whereas, payment system networks and technology provide significant economic benefits to merchants and consumers; and