

are age 50 or older. Many will want and need to save more every year if they are to be ready for retirement. These are the people who need GROWTH.

How many are there? More than 31 million Americans are saving through taxable mutual fund accounts, either as supplements to their employers' plans or because they do not have such plans. The GROWTH Act would provide sensible tax treatment that would defer, not avoid, taxation. In the process, it would better enable retirement savers in what they are trying to do, plan for an uncertain road ahead.

A bigger tax debate is ahead, along with a bigger debate about the future of Social Security and the way to modernize and improve private sector retirement savings tools that must supplement it. The GROWTH Act is one of those practical building blocks that deserves to be part of future debates on tax and retirement policy. Its impact illustrates just how many millions of American households are out there right now, households of modest incomes, saving on their own, through mutual fund investments, making up that growing middle class, a middle class that is facing a lot of squeezes, a lot of growing demands on their savings, but a group that is trying to save nevertheless. About three in five fund investors have household incomes between \$25,000 and \$100,000. Not high-flyers looking to be creative, but working people who deserve to find a few less obstacles in their way.

I urge my colleagues to join Mr. CRAPO and me in supporting the GROWTH Act and refocusing their attention to just who these savers are and what kind of sensible tax policy they need.

Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 2127. A bill to provide assistance to families of miners involved in mining accidents; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today, I heard disturbing testimony during a Senate HELP Committee hearing on the Crandall Canyon Mine disaster about the misinformation that families received during the tragedy. When I met with many of the family members of the miners involved in the accident, I saw the enduring pain of their loss, and, although there is nothing I can do to take that pain away, I can work to ensure that if other families are ever faced with such tragedy in the future, they will be cared for with respect, dignity, and consistency.

I am proud to introduce the Mine Disaster Family Assistance Act of 2007, closely modeled after the National Transportation Safety Board's highly effective family assistance model used during major aviation accidents in this country to care for victims and their families.

This bill puts families who experience such a tragedy first by establishing a director of family support services at MSHA. This person would

serve as the Federal Government's point-of-contact for families during an emergency. The director would be responsible for the overall coordination of family services provided by all parties involved in a mine emergency and ensure that families receive consistent information first during rescue and investigation efforts.

Second, it requires the designation of an independent nonprofit organization with experience in disasters and post-trauma family communication, such as the American Red Cross, ARC, as the primary coordinator of emotional care and support for families. This organization will provide mental health and counseling services to families, and a private place to grieve; meet with family members onsite; and update families on accident and post accident activities.

Third, it requires mine operators to submit a strategic plan to clearly establish accident protocols for meeting the needs of families before an emergency occurs. To ensure these plans are submitted and approved in a timely fashion, the bill also prohibits approval of other operating plans until a mine has an MSHA-approved family assistance plan.

Finally, it gives families a voice in the process by including them as a required partner in a task force designed to provide recommendations for program enhancements. Other partners include mine operators, including operators of small mines, labor, the ARC, and the Bureau of Land Management.

We all agree that families who have lost loved ones in mining tragedies like those at Sago and Crandall, deserve our best efforts to provide consistent communication and support. The landmark MINER Act, signed into law last year, was a good first step in this direction, but these tragedies demand that we take additional steps to ensure that the victims' families receive the best information and care possible during an emergency.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 341—CONCERNING THE RECENT FOREST FIRES IN GREECE

Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 341

Whereas more than 3,000 forest fires have been recorded in Greece since June 2007;

Whereas over a 10-day period, an estimated 4,000 people saw their homes destroyed by the wildfires, which razed dozens of villages, destroyed livestock and charred an estimated 469,000 acres of mostly forest and farmland;

Whereas dozens of Greek families have lost their loved ones to the fires;

Whereas thousands of Greeks have been left homeless and hundreds of thousands of acres of pristine forest have been destroyed;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of mature olive trees, vineyards and thousands of animals perished in the flames;

Whereas damage to the Greek economy is estimated at between \$1,600,000,000 and \$5,400,000,000;

Whereas the United States and Greece have stood side by side in confronting world challenges throughout the 20th century, and will stand together in confronting this new challenge; and

Whereas the United States, through its government, its people and its Greek-American community, has already extended significant support to the people of Greece during this difficult time: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) extends its condolences and sympathy to the Government and the people of Greece for the grave loss of life and vast destruction caused by the devastating fires raging through Greece;

(2) vows its full support and solidarity to a close friend, a strategic partner, and a longstanding ally in this painful and difficult hour;

(3) fully supports the Administration's initiatives to provide assistance and relief to the people of Greece, including its pledge of \$1,500,000 in aid as well as expert and technical assistance;

(4) encourages public institutions, specialized agencies, as well as private citizens, to offer their resources; and

(5) expresses confidence that Greece and its people will succeed in overcoming the hardships incurred through this tragedy.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a resolution with my friend and colleague Senator MENENDEZ concerning the devastating series of forest fires which ravaged much of Greece, especially in the Peloponnese, this past summer.

Beginning in June, over 3,000 forest fires raged across the cradle of Democracy. Tragically, 9 people were killed in blazes in June and July, and 68 people lost their lives in the especially destructive fires between August 24 and September 4. The Greek economy ministry initially estimated that the fires caused 1.6 billion euros, or \$2.2 billion of damage. Subsequent assessments have placed that figure as high as \$5.4 billion.

I am proud that, more than offering its sympathy, the U.S. has also offered its help to the brave people and government of Greece. According to the State Department, the U.S. Government has thus far contributed nearly \$2 million in aid to Greece in response to the fires. The bulk of this aid was provided in a "wildfire assistance package" consisting of the deployment of a technical assistance team which arrived in Greece on September 1 representing the disciplines of: fire management, fire investigation, emergency management systems, burn area emergency rehabilitation, and ecosystem and watershed restoration. Additionally, the U.S. Government provided 3,000 complete fire suits for the national fire brigade.

Americans have also stepped up to give privately to the victims of these terrible fires as well. Charities organized by Greek-American organizations and the Orthodox Church in the U.S. have already raised millions to aid the people and government of Greece in rebuilding and mitigating the economic loss resulting from the fires.

It is essential for the Senate to both recognize and pledge its support for

these efforts, as the connection between the U.S. Congress and the Greek people is not limited to the Greek Americans who have served as members, or the foreign policy issues debated in its halls. Rather, the very inspiration for the Congress as a legislative body are the democratic chambers of ancient Greece.

More recently, the U.S. and Greece stood resolutely by one another in confronting the political and economic challenges of the 20th century, and are close partners in combating terror in these opening years of the 21st century. It is imperative that we continue to stand together in confronting this new challenge.

On September 5, the House of Representatives passed a similar resolution to the one Senator MENENDEZ and I have introduced today. These resolutions reflect that the myriad ties between our two countries, be they cultural, economic or geopolitical, comprise a bond that can and should only strengthen in the wake of this devastating tragedy. I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting the people and government of Greece at this critical moment.

SENATE RESOLUTION 342—RECOGNIZING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH AND CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF HISPANIC AMERICANS AND THEIR IMMENSE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NATION

Mr. SALAZAR (for himself, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. REID, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. LUGAR, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. DOMENICI, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. DODD, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mrs. DOLE, and Mr. CRAPO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 342

Whereas from September 15, 2007, through October 15, 2007, the country celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month;

Whereas the Census Bureau estimates the Hispanic population in the United States at 44,300,000 people, making Hispanic Americans the largest ethnic minority within the United States;

Whereas 1 in every 3 children under the age of 18 in the United States is Hispanic, and there are now more than 14,000,000 Hispanic children living in the United States;

Whereas the purchasing power of Hispanic Americans is projected to reach \$1,000,000,000,000 by 2010 and there are more than 1,600,000 Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States, representing the economic contributions and spirit of entrepreneurship of the Hispanic community;

Whereas Hispanic Americans serve in all branches of the Armed Forces, bravely fought in every war in United States history, and continue to serve with distinction in Afghanistan and Iraq;

Whereas 140,000 Hispanic soldiers served in the Korean War;

Whereas more than 80,000 Hispanics served in the Vietnam War, representing 5.5 percent

of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country in that conflict although they comprised only 4.5 percent of the United States population at the time;

Whereas approximately 11 percent, the largest percentage of any ethnic or racial group, of the more than 3,700 United States military fatalities in Iraq have been Hispanic;

Whereas there are more than 1,100,000 Hispanic veterans of the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas 41 Hispanic Americans have received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force which can be bestowed upon an individual serving in the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas Hispanic Americans are dedicated public servants, holding posts at the highest levels of government, including 3 seats in the United States Senate; and

Whereas Hispanic Americans harbor a deep commitment to family and community, an enduring work ethic, and a perseverance to succeed and contribute to society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15, 2007, through October 15, 2007;

(2) honors the heritage and culture of Hispanic Americans and their immense contributions to the life of the Nation; and

(3) urges the people of the United States to observe Hispanic Heritage Month with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 343—DESIGNATING OCTOBER 19, 2007, AS “NATIONAL MAMMOGRAPHY DAY”

Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. BAYH, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. COLEMAN, and Mr. VOINOVICH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 343

Whereas, according to the American Cancer Society, in 2007, 178,480 women will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer and 40,460 women will die from that disease;

Whereas it is estimated that about 2,000,000 women were diagnosed with breast cancer in the 1990s, and that in nearly 500,000 of those cases the cancer resulted in death;

Whereas approximately 3,000,000 women in the United States are living with breast cancer, about 2,300,000 have been diagnosed with the disease, and an estimated 1,000,000 do not yet know they have the disease;

Whereas African-American women suffer a 36 percent greater mortality rate from breast cancer than White women and more than a 100 percent greater mortality rate from breast cancer than women from Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian populations;

Whereas the risk of breast cancer increases with age, with a woman at age 70 having twice as much of a chance of developing the disease as a woman at age 50;

Whereas at least 90 percent of the women who get breast cancer have no family history of the disease;

Whereas mammograms, when operated professionally at a certified facility, can provide safe screening and early detection of breast cancer in many women;

Whereas mammography is an excellent method for early detection of localized

breast cancer, which has a 5-year survival rate of 98 percent;

Whereas the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society continue to recommend periodic mammograms; and

Whereas the National Breast Cancer Coalition recommends that each woman and her health care provider make an individual decision about mammography: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates October 19, 2007, as “National Mammography Day”; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 48—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS REGARDING HIGH LEVEL VISITS TO THE UNITED STATES BY DEMOCRATICALLY-ELECTED OFFICIALS OF TAIWAN

Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. LOTT, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. COBURN, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 48

Whereas, for over half a century, a close relationship has existed between the United States and Taiwan, which has been of enormous political, economic, cultural, and strategic advantage to both countries;

Whereas Taiwan is one of the strongest democratic allies of the United States in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas it is United States policy to support and strengthen democracy around the world;

Whereas, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, Taiwan made a remarkable transition to a full-fledged democracy with a vibrant economy and a vigorous multi-party political system that respects human rights and the rule of law;

Whereas, in spite of its praise for democracy in Taiwan, the United States Government continues to adhere to guidelines from the 1970s that bar the President, Vice President, Premier, Foreign Minister, and Defense Minister of Taiwan from coming to Washington, DC;

Whereas these restrictions deprive the President, Congress, and the American public of the opportunity to engage in a direct dialogue regarding developments in the Asia-Pacific region and key elements of the relationship between the United States and Taiwan;

Whereas whenever high-level visitors from Taiwan, including the President, seek to come to the United States, their request results in a period of complex, lengthy, and humiliating negotiations;

Whereas lifting these restrictions will help bring a friend and ally of the United States out of its isolation, which will be beneficial to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas, in consideration of the major economic, security, and political interests shared by the United States and Taiwan, it is to the benefit of the United States for United States officials to meet and communicate directly with the democratically-elected officials of Taiwan;

Whereas since the Taiwan Strait is one of the world's flashpoints in terms of global security, it is essential that United States policymakers directly communicate with the leaders of Taiwan; and