

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my distinguished colleague, Senator SMITH, in honoring our Nation's veterans through passage of S. Res. 365. We are days away from honoring veterans for their sacrifices with a national day of recognition on November 11. Our resolution would urge the President to order a proclamation calling upon employers to make special efforts to recruit and hire veterans this Veterans Day.

As chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am well acquainted with the employment issues facing veterans, members of the Guard and Reserves, and their families as they seek to move from the military to the civilian workforce. Making these transitions is never easy, but for younger veterans it can be particularly difficult. For members of the National Guard and Reserves, the return to a job they previously held may be challenging for a variety of reasons. For family members, the uncertainty of multiple and extended deployments poses different obstacles. Finally, the obstacles facing those who are disabled during their service can sometimes seem overwhelming. The needs of these individuals deserve our utmost attention and resources.

Despite these problems and challenges, veterans make good employees. They know how to work, and they bring with them a wealth of expertise and experience. I believe the employment data supports my belief since rates of unemployment for veterans generally are lower than their non-veteran counterparts. However, the rate of unemployment for younger veterans and those recently separated from active duty tends to be higher than their non-veteran peers.

This resolution would highlight the actions that employers can take to honor the sacrifices of our Nation's veterans and allow them to use the skills learned while in service to their country. Veterans have made sacrifices serving our Nation. When they come back from that service, it is our responsibility as legislators to aid them in returning to the civilian world. Having a job can be one of the greatest steps a returning servicemember can make in successfully reintegrating into civilian society.

I am honored to stand with my colleague in honoring the veterans of the Nation, and I urge my colleagues to join us. It would be my hope that employers around the country take up this proclamation as a best practice and continue to look at veterans as their first choice when making hiring decisions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 373) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 373

Whereas the people of the United States have sincere appreciation and respect for the individuals who serve in the Armed Forces;

Whereas in order to recognize their sacrifices, including time out from their civilian careers while serving in the Armed Forces, Congress enacted the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944 to restore veterans to a more favorable competitive position for Federal Government employment;

Whereas, although veterans acquire skills and qualities during their military service that make them ideal candidates for employment, some veterans need assistance in readjusting to civilian life, including some young veterans who experience high unemployment rates;

Whereas it is acknowledged that the dignity, pride, and satisfaction of a civilian job are essential to the smooth and full reintegration into civilian life of those who have answered our Nation's call to arms; and

Whereas all citizens and all employers benefit from the service of members of the Armed Forces and thus bear some responsibility to assist in the reintegration of former servicemembers into civilian life: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) urges all employers, private sector as well as State, county, and local government, to target veterans for recruitment and to afford qualified veterans hiring preference similar to the benefits provided by chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, to preference eligibles, as defined in section 2108 of such title; and

SUPPORTING DESIGNATION OF A NATIONAL VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT WEEK

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 374, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 374) expressing support for designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our Nation in times of war and conflict.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 374) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 374

Whereas the Veterans History Project was established by a unanimous vote of the

United States Congress to collect and preserve the wartime stories of American veterans;

Whereas Congress charged the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to undertake the Veterans History Project and to engage the public in the creation of a collection of oral histories that would be a lasting tribute to individual veterans and an abundant resource for scholars;

Whereas there are 17,000,000 wartime veterans in America whose stories can educate people of all ages about important moments and events in the history of the United States and the world and provide instructive narratives that illuminate the meanings of "service", "sacrifice", "citizenship", and "democracy";

Whereas the Veterans History Project relies on a corps of volunteer interviewers, partner organizations, and an array of civic minded institutions nationwide who interview veterans according to the guidelines it provides;

Whereas increasing public participation in the Veterans History Project will increase the number of oral histories that can be collected and preserved and increase the number of veterans it so honors; and

Whereas "National Veterans Awareness Week" commendably preceded this resolution in the years 2005 and 2006: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes "National Veterans Awareness Week";

(2) supports the designation of a "National Veterans History Project Week";

(3) calls on the people of the United States to interview at least one veteran in their families or communities according to guidelines provided by the Veterans History Project; and

(4) encourages local, State, and national organizations along with Federal, State, city and county governmental institutions to participate in support of the effort to document, preserve, and honor the service of American wartime veterans.

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Veterans' Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 289 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 289) expressing the sense of the Senate that a "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" should be established.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 289) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 289

Whereas the Vietnam War was fought in Vietnam from 1961 to 1975, and involved North Vietnam and the Viet Cong in conflict with the United States and South Vietnam;

Whereas the United States became involved in Vietnam because policy-makers in the United States believed that if South Vietnam fell to a Communist government that Communism would spread throughout the rest of Southeast Asia;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces began serving in an advisory role to the South Vietnamese in 1961;

Whereas as a result of the Gulf of Tonkin incidents on August 2 and 4, 1964, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (Public Law 88-408), on August 7, 1964, which effectively handed over war-making powers to President Johnson until such time as "peace and security" had returned to Vietnam;

Whereas, in 1965, United States Armed Forces ground combat units arrived in Vietnam;

Whereas, by the end of 1965, there were 80,000 United States troops in Vietnam, and by 1969 a peak of approximately 543,000 troops was reached;

Whereas, on January 27, 1973, the Treaty of Paris was signed, which required the release of all United States prisoners of war held in North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all United States Armed Forces from South Vietnam;

Whereas, on March 30, 1973, the United States Armed Forces completed the withdrawal of combat troops from Vietnam;

Whereas more than 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces lost their lives in Vietnam and more than 300,000 members of the Armed Forces were wounded;

Whereas, in 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in the District of Columbia to commemorate those members of the United States Armed Forces who died or were declared missing in action in Vietnam;

Whereas the Vietnam War was an extremely divisive issue among the people of the United States;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces who served bravely and faithfully for the United States during the Vietnam War were caught upon their return home in the crossfire of public debate about the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War;

Whereas the establishment of a "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" would be an appropriate way to honor those members of the United States Armed Forces who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam War; and

Whereas March 30 would be an appropriate day to establish a "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that there should be established a "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" to honor those members of the United States Armed Forces who served in Vietnam.

DISCHARGE AND REFERRAL—H.R. 767

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 767, and that the bill be referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 3495 and H.R. 3685

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk. I ask for their first readings en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3495) to establish a National Commission on Children and Disasters, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 3685) to prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Mr. DURBIN. I now ask for their second reading en bloc, and I object to my own request en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2007, AND TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2007

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. Friday, November 9; that on Friday, the Senate meet in pro forma session only with no business conducted; that at the close of the pro forma session the Senate then stand adjourned until 10 a.m., Tuesday, November 13; that on Tuesday, following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour deemed expired, the time of the two leaders reserved for their use later in the day; that the Senate then proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Robert M. Dow, Jr., to be a U.S. district judge; that the nomination be debated until 10:10 a.m., with the time equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees; that at 10:10 a.m., the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nomination; that upon confirmation, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table and the

President immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then return to legislative session and be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each and the time equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first portion and the majority controlling the final portion; provided further that Senator DORGAN control up to 30 minutes of the majority's time; that at 12:30 p.m., the Senate stand in recess until 2:15 p.m. for the respective party conference meetings.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 11:39 p.m., adjourned until Friday, November 9, 2007, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PATRICIA M. HASLACH, OF OREGON, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE AS UNITED STATES SENIOR COORDINATOR FOR THE ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION (APEC) FORUM.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MARY BETH LONG, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE PETER W. RODMAN, RESIGNED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. WILLIAM L. SHELTON, 0000

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate: Thursday, November 8, 2007:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

MICHAEL B. MUKASEY, OF NEW YORK, TO BE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

THE ABOVE NOMINATION WAS APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE NOMINEE'S COMMITMENT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS TO APPEAR AND TESTIFY BEFORE ANY DULY CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE.