

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, at 9 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a hearing entitled "The Case for Reform: Foreign Aid and Development."

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, after the 12 p.m. vote in the President's room.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 22, 2009, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Promoting Job Creation and Foreign Investment in the United States: An Assessment of the EB-5 Regional Center Program."

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, at 10 a.m., in room 418 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION, PRODUCT SAFETY, AND INSURANCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, and Insurance of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, at 10 a.m., in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME AND DRUGS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs, be authorized to meet during the session of

the Senate on July 22, 2009, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Metal Theft: Public Hazard, Law Enforcement Challenge."

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on National Parks, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator MERKLEY I ask unanimous consent that Amelia Bell, an intern in his office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of today's session.

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

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Bill Curlin, an Air Force Fellow in Senator DORGAN's office, be granted the privilege of the floor during debate on the fiscal year 2010 Defense authorization bill.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that MAJ Paul Taylor be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of this legislative session.

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

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that floor privileges for the remainder of this session be granted for an intern in my office, Lindy Brownback.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Juliet Beyler, a congressional fellow in the office of Senator GREGG, be allowed the privilege of the floor during consideration of S. 1390.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that MAJ Jim DeLapp, a military fellow in the office of Senator BEGICH, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of Senate consideration of S. 1390.

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

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise on this early evening in July to spend a few minutes to talk about health care. I know it has obviously been a subject of great interest over the last number of days, having been asked to fill in for my dear friend, Senator TED KENNEDY, the chairman of the Health, Education,

Labor, and Pensions Committee, who as we all know is struggling with his own health issues.

I was asked to fill in for him to mark up the HELP Committee's legislation on health care, and I was fortunate to have as my allies in that effort some remarkable Members of this body—both Democrats and Republicans—who, we are told, spent as long a time, maybe longer than for any other mark-up in the history of that committee and one of the longest in the history of this body. There were some 23 sessions over 13 days, covering nearly 300 amendments that were offered on behalf of the 23 Members of the Senate—almost a quarter of this body—serving on that committee.

After that lengthy period of time, we drafted a bipartisan bill. It did not end up being a bipartisan vote. It was a partisan vote coming out of committee, regrettably. But that doesn't mean it will end up that way. I have often been involved in legislative efforts where the committee action would have a partisan conclusion, only to find that after further work, those efforts can attract a broad base of support and develop the kind of broad-based backing that is, I think, an important feature of good legislation.

So while I regret we didn't have any Republican votes in that committee, I am deeply grateful to my Democratic colleagues for their efforts—and also to my Republican colleagues for their efforts—which I will talk about. I intend, in the coming days, to talk about this issue through the remaining weeks we are in session—and possibly even beyond that, if we stay in session in August to work on this issue.

This is not any ordinary issue or ordinary time. I have been around long enough now to have witnessed the debates on this issue going back 30 years. Every single Congress and every single administration predating my arrival here has grappled with this issue—Republicans and Democrats alike. Since the days of Harry Truman in the 1940s, literally every administration has tried to come up with an idea to reform our health care system.

In years past, those efforts were talked about in terms of describing the present condition of health care as being an unacceptable situation; that it was wrong, unethical, immoral that we weren't serving people who should be served. The debate has now changed because it is no longer just unacceptable—which has always been the case—but we are now in a situation where the present conditions are unsustainable. Yesterday and again this morning the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Ben Bernanke, testifying on monetary policy, was asked the question in both the other body as well as in the Banking Committee, which I chair, how important health care was as a matter of economic recovery. In both forums, in different language, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve—while not getting into the details of