

the Native American health care system.

Perhaps most importantly, the Native American health bill permanently reauthorizes all current laws governing the Native American health care system. This means that once this bill is passed, Indian Country will never again have to wait nearly 20 years for a reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act.

This bill also authorizes long-term care services, including hospice care, assisted living, long-term care and home- and community-based care. Current law does not allow for these services to be provided by the Indian Health Service or tribal facilities. Although some areas of Indian Country are merely focused on addressing life or limb medical emergencies, other areas are in need of long-term care. Thus, I believe they should be authorized.

In addition, the bill establishes mental and behavioral health programs beyond alcohol and substance abuse, such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, child sexual abuse and prevention treatment programs. The mental health needs in Native American communities extend beyond alcohol and substance abuse, in fact over 1/3 of the health care needs in Indian Country are related to mental health. The comprehensive mental and behavioral health programs established as a result of this bill will bring necessary care and resources to Native Americans.

In order to address the tragic level of youth suicide, the bill includes behavioral health provisions solely focused on preventing Native American youth suicide. The youth suicide rate in Indian Country is 3.5 times higher than the general population. Earlier this year, I chaired an Indian Affairs hearing to draw attention to this important topic.

The bill also incorporates many new ideas aimed at improving the access to health care available to Native Americans. The bill authorizes projects which will incentivize tribes to use innovative facilities construction which save money and expand the health care services available to Native American communities. For example, these projects include the use of modular component facility construction and mobile health stations.

Modular component health facilities can be built at often one-third the cost and a fraction of the time of a typical health facility. In addition, mobile health stations will allow for Native Americans in rural areas without a hospital, increased access to specialty health services like dialysis, same-day surgery, dental care, or other services. Currently, there is an estimated \$3 billion backlog for maintenance, improvement and construction of Native American health care facilities. In addition, the average age of an Indian Health Service facility is 33 years, as compared to 7 years in the general population. These innovative health care fa-

cilities will go a long way in this disparity and improving access to health care for Native Americans across the country.

The Native American health bill establishes a health delivery demonstration project. This project provides for convenient care services, which could be offered in local grocery stores and other venues, to make health care more available to Native American communities. The health delivery demonstration project authorizes the Indian Health Service to consider other innovative health delivery models, like community health centers, and other models which will increase access to health care services.

I want to end by saying the need for health care is not new for Indian Country. Nowadays, the need for national health care reform is front page news, but our Native Americans have long been in need of health care reforms. Therefore, I intend to offer this Native American health bill as an amendment to any national health care reform bill considered on the Senate floor.

I want to thank all the Native American health advocates who assisted us in the development of this crucial piece of legislation. The Federal Government signed the dotted lines years ago, and today, we make an important step towards finally fulfilling those obligations.

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#### AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2691. Ms. SNOWE (for herself, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2847, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

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#### TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

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On page 124, line 21, strike "section." and insert "section, including an assessment of actions other than increased Federal spending that would improve the development and interdepartmental coordination of the policies of the United States under the United States-Canada Transboundary Resource Sharing Understanding for shared groundfish stocks."

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#### NOTICES OF HEARINGS

##### 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 a hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on National Parks.

The hearing will be held on Wednesday, October 28, 2009, at 2:30 p.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on the current and expected impacts of climate change on units of the National Park System.

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 it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by email to [allison\\_seyferth@energy.senate.gov](mailto:allison_seyferth@energy.senate.gov).

For further information, please contact Sara Tucker at (202) 224-6224 or Allison Seyferth at (202) 224-4905.

##### 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 a hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests.

The hearing will be held on Thursday, October 29, 2009, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on the following bills:

S. 555, to provide for the exchange of certain land located in the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes;

S. 607, to amend the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986 to clarify the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture regarding additional recreational uses of National Forest System land that are subject to ski area permits, and for other purposes;

S. 721, to expand the Alpine Lakes Wilderness in the State of Washington, to designate the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River and Pratt River as wild and scenic rivers, and for other purposes;

S. 1122, to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to enter into cooperative agreements with State foresters authorizing State foresters to provide certain forest, rangeland, and watershed restoration and protection services;

S. 1328 and H.R. 689, to interchange the administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal lands between the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, and for other purposes;

S. 1442, to amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to expand the authorization of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior to provide service-learning opportunities on public lands, establish a grant program for Indian Youth Service Corps, help restore the Nation's natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, and scenic resources, train a new generation of public land managers and enthusiasts, and promote the value of public service; and

H.R. 129, to authorize the conveyance of certain National Forest System lands in the Los Padres National Forest in California.

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 it to