

bring those voices together back in Rhode Island and find the kind of agreement that has enabled these successes, so I am very grateful to them as well.

With that comment, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015— MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 19, H.R. 22.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 19, H.R. 22, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 19, H.R. 22, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, Shelley Moore Capito, Rob Portman, John Cornyn, James M. Inhofe, Daniel Coats, John Boozman, Johnny Isakson, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Deb Fischer, Richard Burr.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I withdraw my motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

ADOPTIVE FAMILY RELIEF ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 145, S. 1300.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1300) to amend the section 221 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide relief for adoptive families from immigrant visa fees in certain situations.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 1300) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1300

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Adoptive Family Relief Act".

SEC. 2. WAIVER OF FEES FOR RENEWAL OF IMMIGRANT VISA FOR ADOPTED CHILD IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS.

Section 221(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(c)) is amended to read as follows:

"(c) PERIOD OF VALIDITY; RENEWAL OR REPLACEMENT.—

"(1) IMMIGRANT VISAS.—An immigrant visa shall be valid for such period, not exceeding six months, as shall be by regulations prescribed, except that any visa issued to a child lawfully adopted by a United States citizen and spouse while such citizen is serving abroad in the United States Armed Forces, or is employed abroad by the United States Government, or is temporarily abroad on business, shall be valid until such time, for a period not to exceed three years, as the adoptive citizen parent returns to the United States in due course of his service, employment, or business.

"(2) NONIMMIGRANT VISAS.—A non-immigrant visa shall be valid for such periods as shall be by regulations prescribed. In prescribing the period of validity of a non-immigrant visa in the case of nationals of any foreign country who are eligible for such visas, the Secretary of State shall, insofar as practicable, accord to such nationals the same treatment upon a reciprocal basis as such foreign country accords to nationals of the United States who are within a similar class; except that in the case of aliens who are nationals of a foreign country and who either are granted refugee status and firmly resettled in another foreign country or are granted permanent residence and residing in another foreign country, the Secretary of State may prescribe the period of validity of such a visa based upon the treatment granted by that other foreign country to alien refugees and permanent residents, respectively, in the United States.

"(3) VISA REPLACEMENT.—An immigrant visa may be replaced under the original number during the fiscal year in which the original visa was issued for an immigrant who establishes to the satisfaction of the consular officer that the immigrant—

"(A) was unable to use the original immigrant visa during the period of its validity because of reasons beyond his control and for which he was not responsible;

"(B) is found by a consular officer to be eligible for an immigrant visa; and

"(C) pays again the statutory fees for an application and an immigrant visa.

"(4) FEE WAIVER.—If an immigrant visa is issued, on or after March 27, 2013, for a child who has been lawfully adopted, or who is coming to the United States to be adopted,

by a United States citizen, any statutory immigrant visa fees relating to a renewal or replacement of such visa may be waived or, if already paid, may be refunded upon request, subject to such criteria as the Secretary of State may prescribe, if—

"(A) the immigrant child was unable to use the original immigrant visa during the period of its validity as a direct result of extraordinary circumstances, including the denial of an exit permit; and

"(B) if such inability was attributable to factors beyond the control of the adopting parent or parents and of the immigrant."

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I just want to briefly say a few words about today's Senate passage of S. 1300, the Adoptive Family Relief Act. The issue this bill addresses is of particular importance to me, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of the legislation.

More than 400 American families—approximately 20 of them from Kentucky—have successfully adopted children from the Democratic Republic of the Congo or the DRC. However, due to the DRC Government's suspension of exit permits—which has been in place for close to 2 years now—many of these families have been unable to bring their adoptive children home to the United States.

For example, although I was pleased to be able to help the Brock family from Owensboro, KY, with the return of one of their adopted sons last Christmas, their other son still remains in the DRC. To make matters worse, many of these families have been financially burdened by the cost of continually renewing their children's visas while they wait for the day the DRC decides to lift the suspension.

In an attempt to help these families, the Adoptive Family Relief Act will provide meaningful financial relief by granting the State Department the authority to waive the fees for multiple visa renewals in this and other extraordinary adoption circumstances.

The bill builds on Congress's bipartisan efforts on this adoption issue, including a provision in this year's congressional budget resolution to encourage a solution to the stalemate in the DRC.

I strongly urge the DRC Government to resolve this matter. I truly hope there is a solution to it soon, but until then I urge the House and President Obama to help us enact the Adoptive Family Relief Act. The passage of this bill through the Senate today will help bring needed assistance to so many loving families across our country who want nothing more than to open their homes to a child in need.

I wish to thank the bill's sponsors, Senators FEINSTEIN and JOHNSON, the 17 other bipartisan cosponsors, and the Judiciary Committee for their hard work and truly bipartisan commitment to solving this heartbreaking issue.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I am sorry. I withhold.