

funding to cover only a very small portion of its Medicaid costs, a burden no State could handle.

The second piece of our legislation fixes this by moving Puerto Rico toward a Medicaid system that provides stable funding for the long term. Additionally, there are several policies in Medicare that treat the island differently from the rest of the Nation, leaving providers and seniors to face unfair penalties and low reimbursements.

This bill eliminates many of these discrepancies to more accurately align Medicare policies in Puerto Rico with the rest of the country. As citizens of the United States—and I emphasize that because sometimes Members of Congress have asked me whether they need an American passport to go to Puerto Rico. I thought they were joking, but they were serious. As citizens of the United States, it is only fair that Puerto Ricans be afforded the same access to care, coverage, and health benefits as everyone else.

Finally, our legislation would incentivize Puerto Rican workers to enter the formal economy and give families the help they need to raise their children by providing parity to the island for the earned-income tax credit and child tax credit. Praised by both Republicans and Democrats as one of the most effective tools to combat poverty and encourage workers to enter the labor market, the earned-income tax credit is currently unavailable to the people of Puerto Rico. However, as American citizens, all it takes for a resident of Puerto Rico to become eligible for a credit is a short plane ride to Miami.

This is just another reason why so many Puerto Ricans have fled the island and taken up residence on the mainland. It makes no sense to prohibit American citizens living in Puerto Rico from taking advantage of this important credit, especially with such a stubbornly lower labor participation rate.

Our legislation corrects this inequity, providing equal treatment for all American citizens, regardless of whether they reside in Puerto Rico or in the States.

I shouldn't need to remind this body that from the infancy of our Nation, the people of Puerto Rico have been there for us and with us, and now we need to be there for them. Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States in 1898 after the Spanish-American War. Less than two decades later, in 1917, Congress passed the Jones-Shafroth Act, granting American citizenship to the residents of the island. But even long before they were granted U.S. citizenship, Puerto Ricans have had a long and profound history of fighting on the side of America.

As far back as 1777, Puerto Rican ports were used by U.S. ships, enabling them to run British blockades and keep commerce flowing, which was so crucial to the war effort. It was Puerto

Rican soldiers who took up arms in the U.S. Civil War, defending this Nation's Capital, Washington, DC, from attack, and they fought in the Battle of Fredericksburg.

In World War I, almost 20,000 Puerto Ricans were drafted into the U.S. Armed Forces. Let's not forget about the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers, the segregated military unit composed almost entirely of soldiers from Puerto Rico, who played a crucial and prominent role in World War I, World War II, and the Korean war.

I am proud to say that I worked with Senator BLUMENTHAL and others to make sure that the heroic Borinqueneers—the only Active-Duty segregated Latino military unit in the history of the United States and the last segregated unit to be deactivated—received well deserved and long overdue national recognition when we passed a bill awarding these courageous patriots with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions to the United States.

While some might be tempted to point their finger at our brothers and sisters on the island and fault Puerto Rico for carrying more than \$70 billion in debt, I challenge my Senate colleagues to work with us on finding solutions because this problem isn't going away.

Mark my words. If we don't act now, this crisis will explode into a full-blown humanitarian catastrophe, not in a matter of decades or even years but in months. In just a couple of months, they have a major payment they do not have the wherewithal to make.

We may think we will kick the ball down the road. But, no, that human catastrophe is going take place in months, and we will be right back here next year with the same set of problems, only far, far worse.

Delaying action is akin to letting an infection reach the bloodstream before seeking treatment. The longer you wait, the more painful and challenging the treatment is. Puerto Rico isn't asking us to pull them out of this, just to give them the wherewithal to help them help themselves be able to achieve the goal.

Let's not stand aside and do nothing while the island burns. Let's not turn our backs on our friends and fellow citizens when they need us the most. Let's instead come together as a nation and support our fellow citizens like we always do when things get tough. The people of Puerto Rico have always been there for us and with us. Let's make sure that we are there for them.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 398—DESIGNATING MARCH 15, 2016, AS “NATIONAL SPEECH AND DEBATE EDUCATION DAY”

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. KING) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 398

Whereas it is essential for youth to learn and practice the art of communicating with and without technology;

Whereas speech and debate education offers students myriad forms of public speaking through which students may develop talent and exercise unique voice and character;

Whereas speech and debate education gives students the 21st-century skills of communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration;

Whereas critical analysis and effective communication allow important ideas, texts, and philosophies the opportunity to flourish;

Whereas personal, professional, and civic interactions are enhanced by the ability of the participants in those interactions to listen, concur, question, and dissent with reason and compassion;

Whereas students who participate in speech and debate have chosen a challenging activity that requires regular practice, dedication, and hard work;

Whereas teachers and coaches of speech and debate devote in-school, afterschool, and weekend hours to equip students with life-changing skills and opportunities;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day emphasizes the lifelong impact of providing people of the United States with the confidence and preparation to both discern and share views;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day acknowledges that most achievements, celebrations, commemorations, and pivotal moments in modern history begin, end, or are crystallized with public address;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day recognizes that learning to research, construct, and present an argument is integral to personal advocacy, social movements, and the making of public policy;

Whereas the National Speech & Debate Association, in conjunction with national and local partners, honors and celebrates the importance of speech and debate through National Speech and Debate Education Day; and

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day emphasizes the importance of speech and debate education and the integration of speech and debate education across grade levels and disciplines: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 15, 2016, as “National Speech and Debate Education Day”;

(2) strongly affirms the purposes of National Speech and Debate Education Day; and

(3) encourages educational institutions, businesses, community and civic associations, and all people of the United States to celebrate and promote National Speech and Debate Education Day.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 33—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THOSE WHO COMMIT OR SUPPORT ATROCITIES AGAINST CHRISTIANS AND OTHER ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES, INCLUDING YEZIDIS, TURKMEN, SABEA-MANDEANS, KAKA'E, AND KURDS, AND WHO TARGET THEM SPECIFICALLY FOR ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS REASONS, ARE COMMITTING, AND ARE HEREBY DECLARED TO BE COMMITTING, "WAR CRIMES", "CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY", AND "GENOCIDE"

Mr. SASSE submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 33

Whereas those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, intend to exterminate or to force the migration or submission of anyone who does not share their views concerning religion;

Whereas Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities have been an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle East for millennia;

Whereas Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities have been murdered, subjugated, forced to emigrate, and suffered grievous bodily and psychological harm, including sexual enslavement and abuse, inflicted in a deliberate and calculated manner in violation of the laws of their respective nations, the laws of war, laws and treaties forbidding crimes against humanity, and the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed at Paris December 9, 1948 (in this concurrent resolution referred to as the "Convention");

Whereas these atrocities are undertaken with the specific intent to bring about the eradication and displacement of their communities and the destruction of their cultural heritage in violation of local laws, the laws of war, laws and treaties that punish crimes against humanity, and the Convention;

Whereas local, national, and international laws and treaties forbidding "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity" and the Convention condemn murder, massacre, forced migration, extrajudicial punishment, kidnapping, slavery, human trafficking, torture, rape, and persecution of individuals because of their religion and shall be punished, whether committed by "constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals" as provided by local laws, international laws and agreements, and the Convention;

Whereas Article I of the Convention and international and local laws confirm that genocide and crimes against humanity, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, are crimes that government authorities are obligated to prevent and to punish;

Whereas Article II of the Convention declares, "In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental

harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

Whereas Article III of the Convention affirms, "The following acts shall be punishable: (a) Genocide; (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide; (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide; (d) Attempt to commit genocide; (e) Complicity in genocide."

Whereas, on July 10, 2015, Pope Francis, Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, declared that Middle Eastern Christians are facing genocide, a reality that must be "denounced" and that "[i]n this third world war, waged piecemeal, which we are now experiencing, a form of genocide—and I stress the word genocide—is taking place, and it must end";

Whereas a March 13, 2015, report of the United Nations Committee on Human Rights prepared at the request of the Government of Iraq stated that "[e]thnic and religious groups targeted by ISIL include Yezidis, Christians, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kaka'e, Kurds and Shi'a" and that "[i]t is reasonable to conclude that some of the incidents [in Iraq in 2014–2015] . . . may constitute genocide"; and

Whereas attacks on Yezidis included the mass killing of men and boys and enslavement and forcible transfer of women and children: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That—

(1) the atrocities committed against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities targeted specifically for religious reasons are, and are hereby declared to be, "crimes against humanity", and "genocide";

(2) each of the Contracting Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed at Paris December 9, 1948, and other international agreements forbidding war crimes and crimes against humanity, particularly the governments of countries and their nationals who are in any way supporting these crimes, are reminded of their legal obligations under the Convention and these international agreements;

(3) every government and multinational body should call the atrocities being committed in the name of religion by their rightful names: "crimes against humanity", "war crimes", and "genocide";

(4) the United Nations and the United Nations Secretary-General are called upon to assert leadership by calling the atrocities being committed in these places by their rightful names: "war crimes", "crimes against humanity", and "genocide";

(5) the member states of the United Nations, with an urgent appeal to the Arab States that wish to uphold religious freedom, tolerance, and justice—

(A) should join in this concurrent resolution;

(B) should collaborate on measures to prevent further war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide; and

(C) should collaborate on the establishment and operation of domestic, regional and international tribunals to punish those responsible for the ongoing crimes;

(6) the governments of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, and other countries are commended for having undertaken to shelter and protect those fleeing the violence of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria ("ISIS" or "Da'esh") and other extremists until they can safely return to their homes in Iraq and Syria; and

(7) all those who force the migration of religious communities from their ancestral homelands, where they have lived and practiced their faith in safety and stability for hundreds of years—including specifically in the Nineveh Plain, a historic heartland of Christianity in Iraq and Mount Sinjar, the historic home of the Yezidis—should be tracked, sanctioned, arrested, prosecuted, and punished in accordance with the laws of the place where their crimes were committed and under applicable international criminal statutes and conventions.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3450. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3450. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following.

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

SECTION 1. NATIONAL VOLUNTARY BIOENGINEERED FOOD LABELING STANDARD.

The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"Subtitle E—National Voluntary Bioengineered Food Labeling Standard

"SEC. 291. DEFINITIONS.

"In this subtitle:

"(1) **BIOENGINEERING.**—The term 'bioengineering', and any similar term, as determined by the Secretary, with respect to a food, refers to a food—

"(A) that contains genetic material that has been modified through in vitro recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) techniques; and

"(B) for which the modification could not otherwise be obtained through conventional breeding or found in nature.

"(2) **FOOD.**—The term 'food' has the meaning given the term in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

"(3) **SECRETARY.**—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Agriculture.

"SEC. 292. APPLICABILITY.

"This subtitle shall apply to any claim in the labeling of food that indicates, directly or indirectly, that the food is a bioengineered food or bioengineering was used in the development or production of the food, including a claim that a food is or contains an ingredient that was developed or produced using bioengineering.

"SEC. 293. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL VOLUNTARY BIOENGINEERED FOOD LABELING STANDARD.

"(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARD.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subtitle, the Secretary shall—

"(1) establish a national voluntary bioengineered food labeling standard with respect to—

"(A) any bioengineered food; and

"(B) any food that may be bioengineered or may have been produced or developed using bioengineering; and