

trades under the supervision of the United States Customs service, and, in Guam, in coordination with the Guam Customs and Quarantine Agency; and

(2) Foreign built United States flag vessels to freely engage in the interstate and intrastate sectors of the non-contiguous trades under a coastwise (non-contiguous) endorsement; and be it further

Resolved, That the Twenty-Fourth Guam Legislature respectfully requests the President of the United States and his Administration to support the Congressional request in this Resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That Guam's Congressional Delegate request Congress to exempt Guam, Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico from maritime cabotage; and be it further

Resolved, That the Speaker certify to, and the Legislative Secretary attests, the adoption hereof and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to the President of the United States; to the President of the United States Senate; to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; to the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation; to the Guam Congressional Delegate; and to the Honorable Carl T.C. Gutierrez, *Maga'lahaen Guahan*.

Duly and regularly adopted on the 29th day of July, 1998.

POM-546. A resolution adopted by the House of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 11-87

Whereas, 48 USCS, Section 1694(a) establishes a federal District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands; and

Whereas, 48 USCS, Section 1694(b) directs that the President of the United States with the advice and consent of the United States Senate shall appoint a Judge for the District Court of the Mariana Islands; and

Whereas, the term of office for the Judge appointed to the District Court of the Northern Mariana Islands is ten years; and

Whereas, it is a tradition and practice of the United States that an appointee to a District Court in a state normally comes from that state; and

Whereas, judges who serve in the Northern Mariana Islands need to be familiar with the unique cultures, customs and traditions of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands; now, therefore be it

Resolved, by the House of Representatives, Eleventh Northern Mariana Commonwealth Legislature, That the House calls upon the Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Washington Representative to petition the President and the U.S. Senate so that all future candidates for appointment to the District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands should be nominated from among the qualified people of the Northern Mariana Islands who are familiar with the unique languages, cultures, customs and traditions of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands; and be it further

Resolved, That the Speaker of the House shall certify and the House Clerk shall attest to the adoption of this resolution and thereafter transmit copies to the President of the United States, the President of the U.S. Senate, the Governor of the Northern Mariana Islands, and to the Washington Representative of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Adopted by the House of Representatives on August 26, 1998.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CAMPBELL, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment:

H.R. 3069. A bill to extend the Advisory Council on California Indian Policy to allow the Advisory Council to advise Congress on the implementation of the proposals and recommendations of the Advisory Council (Rept. No. 105-342).

By Mr. SPECTER, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1385. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the list of diseases presumed to be service connected with respect to radiation-exposed veterans (Rept. No. 105-343).

By Mr. SPECTER, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, with an amendment to the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title:

S. 1822. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize provision of care to veterans treated with nasopharyngeal radium irradiation (Rept. No. 105-344).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WARNER:

S. 2506. A bill to establish a National Commission on Terrorism; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. BURNS, and Mrs. HUTCHISON):

S. 2507. A bill to stimulate increased domestic cruise ship opportunities for the American cruising public by temporarily reducing barriers for entry into the domestic cruise ship trade; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. COCHRAN:

S. 2508. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to impose conditions on the implementation of the interim payment system for home health services furnished by home health agencies under the medicare program and to modify the standards for calculating the per beneficiary payment limits under such payment system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 2509. A bill to provide further protections for the watershed of the Little Sandy River as part of the Bull Run Watershed Management Unit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. STEVENS (for himself, Mr. BYRD, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BREAUX, Mr. BUMPERS, Mr. BURNS, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. COVERDELL, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. D'AMATO, Mr. DODD, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mr. FORD, Mr. FRIST, Mr. GORTON, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. GRAMS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELMS, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. KEMPTHORNE, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LOTT, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. MCCONNELL, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. MURKOWSKI, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. REED, Mr. REID, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. THOMPSON,

Mr. THURMOND, Mr. TORRICELLI, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2510. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the bicentennial of the Library of Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. LUGAR (for himself and Mr. HARKIN) (by request):

S. 2511. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to pay employees of the Food Safety and Inspection Service working in establishments subject to the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Poultry Products Inspection Act for overtime and holiday work performed by the employees; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. FRIST (for himself, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. LOTT, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. COATS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. GREGG, and Mr. BINGAMAN):

S. Con. Res. 119. A concurrent resolution recognizing the 50th anniversary of the American Red Cross Blood Services; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SARBANES (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. ROBB, and Mr. WARNER):

S. Con. Res. 120. A concurrent resolution to redesignate the United States Capitol Police headquarters building located at 119 D Street, Northeast, Washington, D.C., as the "Eney, Chestnut, Gibson Memorial Building"; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WARNER:

S. 2506. A bill to establish a National Commission on Terrorism; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON TERRORISM LEGISLATION

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, terrorism, both domestic and international, will regrettably, continue to be a threat to United States citizens and, indeed, to humanity into the millennium. It is the weapon of choice for those nations, entities, and individuals bent on pursuing myriad aims through the cowardly, cold-blooded sacrifice of innocents.

In his remarks to the opening session of the United Nations General Assembly yesterday, President Clinton focused on the reality of terrorism in the world community. "This is a threat," he said, "to all humankind." At the end of this statement, I include excerpts of the President's speech.

Terrorism is one of the principal threats to global economic and political stability and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. As such, U.S. foreign and economic policies designed to foster peace and prosperity through stability will be weakened.

U.S. policies, citizens and interests continue to be prime targets for international terrorism. The April 1998 Department of State report, "Patterns of

Global Terrorism," noted that approximately 33% of all terrorist incidents worldwide were committed against U.S. citizens or property. These attacks were by and large perpetrated outside of the continental United States.

The Congress will soon be considering appropriations to increase the physical security to United States missions abroad. Of the 260 diplomatic posts overseas, only 40 are determined to be safe against terrorist attack.

While it is clear that the safety and stability of the world community continue to be threatened, terrorist activity and the perpetrators of that activity require leaders to reexamine our understanding of terrorism and develop policy to continue to combat the threat.

The motivation to commit acts of terrorism are no longer viewed as those with simply political ends. No longer are these senseless acts of death and destruction purely the domain of those with a political agenda. Increasingly, terrorists are motivated by religious goals, by the pursuit of financial profit, by long-standing racial, ethnic or tribal divisions and animosities, or by a mix of all of the above.

The age of information technology and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction threaten to increase the potential arsenal for terror. In testimony before the Armed Services Committee, witnesses have explained, as you can well imagine, the possible devastation which could be inflicted through skilled use of modern technologies. What have been violent attacks with rudimentary car bombs, may very well soon be attacks of apocalyptic proportions.

A few days ago, Representative FRANK WOLF, an outstanding Member of the House from just across the Potomac and able member of the Commonwealth's delegation, presented to me this legislation to address the challenges of the terrorism threat. His bill has been accepted by the House of Representatives and will be a conference item by the Appropriations Committee. I present this legislation to my colleagues in the Senate for consideration and deliberation.

The legislation assembles 15 distinguished experts in the field of terrorism, including three Congressmen and three Senators. Their goal will be to review and assess United States policies on terrorism, from basic understanding to appropriate response, and recommend changes as warranted. This initiative is not intended as an attack on existing policy, but a means to enhance our understanding of one of the principal threats to stability in the millennium and focus every available resource to eliminate the threat.

I urge my colleagues to review this important legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that excerpts from President Clinton's address to the United Nations be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the excerpts where ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE OPENING SESSION OF THE 53RD UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The President. * * * We still are bedeviled by ethnic, racial, religious and tribal hatreds; by the spread of weapons of mass destruction; by the almost frantic effort of too many states to acquire such weapons; and, despite all efforts to contain it, terrorism is not fading away with the end of the 20th century. It is a continuing defiance of Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which says, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

* * * * *

Obviously this is a matter of profound concern to us. In the last 15 years our citizens have been targeted over and over again—in Beirut, over Lockerbie, in Saudi Arabia, at home in Oklahoma City by one of our own citizens, and even here in New York in one of our most public buildings, and most recently on August 7th in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, where Americans who devoted their lives to building bridges between nations, people very much like all of you, died in a campaign of hatred against the United States.

* * * * *

If terrorism is at the top of the American agenda—and should be at the top of the world's agenda—what, then are the concrete steps we can take together to protect our common destiny. What are our common obligations? At least, I believe they are these: to give terrorists no support, no sanctuary, no financial assistance; to bring pressure on states that do; to act together to step up extradition and prosecution; to sign the Global Anti-Terror Conventions; to strengthen the Biological Weapons and Chemical Convention; to enforce the Chemical Weapons Convention; to promote stronger domestic laws and control the manufacture and export of explosives; to raise international standards for airport security, to combat the conditions that spread violence and despair.

* * * * *

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. BURNS, and Mrs. HUTCHISON):

S. 2507. A bill to stimulate increased domestic cruise ship opportunities for the American cruising public by temporarily reducing barriers for entry into the domestic cruise ship trade; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

THE UNITED STATES CRUISE SHIP TOURISM ACT
OF 1998

• Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I, with Senators THURMOND, BURNS, and HUTCHISON, introduce the United States Cruise Ship Tourism Act of 1998. The purpose of this bill is to stimulate increased domestic cruise vessel opportunities for the American cruising public by temporarily reducing barriers for entry into the domestic cruise ship trade.

The oceangoing cruise ship industry offers the American cruising public with a multitude of itineraries in international trade. However, due to barriers to entry such as the Passenger Vessel Services Act, large cruise ship domestic trade options are limited to one oceangoing cruise ship in Hawaii.

Also, the U.S. port calls of these international itineraries are heavily concentrated in Florida and Alaska due to the proximity of these states to neighboring countries. This means that America's cruising public is denied the opportunity to cruise to many attractive U.S. port destinations, and those ports are denied the economic benefits of those visits, due to these domestic cruise ship trade barriers to entry.

Three separate bills addressing the domestic cruise ship trade have been referred to the Commerce Committee this Congress: S. 668, S. 803, and S. 2290. Each of these bills takes a different approach to removing barriers and stimulating growth in this area. Senator HUTCHISON, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine, held a hearing last year on this subject. I would prefer we take the approach proposed in S. 803, of which I am a cosponsor, but I understand that bill does not address the concerns of some other members. We have been working with representatives of all industries concerned with this legislation for several months in an attempt to reach a consensus on this issue.

While a consensus has not yet been achieved, I believe it is time to take another step forward in the legislative process. My bill would allow the Secretary of Transportation to waive certain current coastwise trade restrictions on a limited basis to stimulate the domestic cruise ship trade. I expect some of my colleagues on the Commerce Committee may want to make additional changes to this bill in Committee. I look forward to working these issues out with them in the next week so that we may report this bill to the Senate later this month.

I believe it is important for this Congress to take action on this issue this year. We should maximize the economic growth potential of the domestic cruise ship trade and the cruising opportunities for America's public.●

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 2509. A bill to provide further protections for the watershed of the Little Sandy River as part of the Bull Run Watershed Management Unit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

LITTLE SANDY WATERSHED
PROTECTION

• Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I am today, along with Congressman BLUMENAUER in the U.S. House, introducing legislation to make sure that in the next century the children of Portland can go to their kitchen faucet and take a glass of drinking water that is as safe and pure as any that the pioneers found when they got here.

Why protect the Little Sandy? The answer is as clear as the water in that stream. Essentially, what we are proposing is to finish the job begun two years ago with passage of the Oregon Resources and Conservation Act of

1996, which brought statutory protection to the Bull Run Watershed.

Portland's city fathers acted in 1890 to protect Bull Run, and it is fitting that we continue that effort today. More than one-third of the Little Sandy watershed has already been logged; clearly, this drainage has already been pushed, and pushed hard, in terms of past timber harvest.

The protection our bill would offer will not only affect clean drinking water, but salmon recovery as well. I am hopeful that this legislation will become an important part of our region's approach to restoring steelhead habitat.

Finally, I want to commend the leadership of Mayor Vera Katz, Commissioner Erik Sten, and former Commissioner Mike Lindberg, whose vision for Portland's future laid the foundation for the introduction of this bill.

I first introduced legislation to protect the Little Sandy when I was in the House. In passing the Oregon Resource Conservation Act of 1996, I made a compromise with Senator Hatfield in which we would designate the Bull Run Watershed Management Unit as a protected area that is off limits to commercial timber harvest, and designate the Little Sandy as a study area. I am now asking the Congress to approve the addition of the Little Sandy study area to the Bull Run Management Unit, and to be subject to the management prescriptions which were established under the ORCA governing the Bull Run.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2509

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

SECTION 1. INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL PORTION OF THE LITTLE SANDY RIVER WATERSHED IN THE BULL RUN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT UNIT, OREGON.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Public law 95-200 (16 U.S.C. 482b note) is amended by striking section 1 and inserting the following:

"SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT UNIT; DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established, subject to valid existing rights, a special resources management unit in the State of Oregon comprising approximately 98,272 acres, as depicted on a map dated September, 1998, and entitled 'Bull Run Watershed Management Unit'.

"(2) MAP.—The map described in paragraph (1) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the Regional Forester-Pacific Northwest Region, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, and in the offices of the State Director, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior.

"(3) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS.—Minor adjustments in the boundaries of the unit may be made from time to time by the Secretary after consultation with the city and appropriate public notice and hearings.

"(b) DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.—In this Act, the term 'Secretary' means—

"(1) with respect to land administered by the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Agriculture; and

"(2) with respect to land administered by the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of the Interior."

(b) CONFORMING AND TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SECRETARY.—Public Law 95-200 (16 U.S.C. 482b note) is amended by striking "Secretary of Agriculture" each place it appears (except subsection (b) of section 1, as added by subsection (a), and except in the amendments made by paragraph (2)) and inserting "Secretary".

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 2(a) of Public Law 95-200 (16 U.S.C. 482b note) is amended by striking "applicable to National Forest System lands" and inserting "applicable to National Forest System land (in the case of land administered by the Secretary of Agriculture) or applicable to land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (in the case of land administered by the Secretary of the Interior)".

(B) MANAGEMENT PLANS.—The first sentence of section 2(c) of Public Law 95-200 (16 U.S.C. 482b note) is amended—

(i) by striking "subsection (a) or (b)" and inserting "subsections (a) and (b)"; and

(ii) by striking "through the maintenance" and inserting "(in the case of land administered by the Secretary of Agriculture) or section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712) (in the case of land administered by the Secretary of the Interior), through the maintenance."

SEC. 2. MANAGEMENT.

(a) TIMBER HARVESTING RESTRICTIONS.—Section 2(b) of Public Law 95-200 (16 U.S.C. 482b note) is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary shall prohibit the cutting of trees on Federal land in the entire unit, as designated in section 1 and depicted on the map referred to in that section."

(b) REPEAL OF MANAGEMENT EXCEPTION.—The Oregon Resource Conservation Act of 1996 (division B of Public Law 104-208) is amended by striking section 606 (110 Stat. 3009-543).

(c) REPEAL OF DUPLICATIVE ENACTMENT.—Section 1026 of division I of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-333, 110 Stat. 4228) and the amendments made by that section are repealed.

(d) WATER RIGHTS.—Nothing in this section strengthens, diminishes, or has any other effect on water rights held by any person or entity.

SEC. 3. LAND EXCHANGE.

(a) LAND EXCHANGE.—Upon application by the city of Portland, Oregon (referred to in this section as the "city"), the Secretary of Agriculture shall enter into negotiations with the city for the transfer of National Forest System land underlying the city's Bull Run water supply facilities to the city in exchange for city-owned land lying within the boundaries of any unit of the National Forest System in Oregon or Washington.

(b) TIME FOR EXCHANGE.—Subject to subsection (c), the Secretary shall expedite the negotiations, if the city applies for a land exchange under subsection (a), and shall complete such a land exchange not later than September 30, 2001.

(c) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAWS.—Except as provided in subsection (d), any land exchange under this section shall be carried out in accordance with section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716) and other applicable law.

(d) EXCEPTION TO SINGLE STATE LIMITATION ON EXCHANGE.—The requirement that Federal and non-Federal parcels of land exchanged for each other must be located within the same State, as specified in the Act entitled "An Act to Consolidate National Forest Lands", approved March 20, 1922 (16 U.S.C. 485), and the first sentence of section 206(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716(b)), shall not apply to the land exchange authorized by this section.●

By Mr. LUGAR (for himself and Mr. HARKIN) (by request):

S. 2511. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to pay employees of the Food Safety and Inspection Service working in establishments subject to the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Poultry Products Inspection Act for overtime and holiday work performed by the employees; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

FEDERAL MEAT AND POULTRY EMPLOYEES PAY ACT OF 1998

● Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, today I introduce legislation, by request, to modify the overtime pay for meat inspectors who are veterinarians. Senator HARKIN, the ranking minority member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, has joined as a cosponsor.

This legislation was transmitted to Congress by the U.S. Department of Agriculture earlier this year. As drafted, the bill would provide the Secretary of Agriculture with the authority to pay Food Safety and Inspection Service employees, working in plants subject to federal meat or poultry inspection, for overtime and holiday work at rates determined by the Secretary.

Due to an anomaly in current law, meat inspectors who are veterinarians receive lower pay for overtime hours than they receive for regular hours. These veterinarians are seeking true overtime pay of 1½ times their hourly rate without a cap on the rate.

While the Federal Meat Inspection Act allows the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide overtime pay at rates determined by USDA, the Poultry Products Inspection Act does not provide this authority. The legislation introduced today would allow USDA to pay overtime for veterinarians at rates determined by USDA. Clearly an inequity exists for veterinarians who work overtime.

I am pleased to introduce this legislation at the request of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. I look forward to hearing the views of my colleagues about this legislation and will seek opportunities to move this bill through the legislative process.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD a copy of the transmittal letter from the Secretary of Agriculture.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, DC, March 23, 1998.

Hon. ALBERT GORE, JR.,
President of the Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: This letter transmits, for the consideration of the Congress, a draft bill "To provide the Secretary of Agriculture with the authority to pay employees of the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) working in establishments subject to the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Poultry Products Inspection Act for overtime and holiday work performed by such employees at rates the Secretary deems appropriate" that the Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends be enacted.

The proposed legislation would provide the Secretary of Agriculture with the discretion to pay employees of FSIS, working in establishments subject to the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA), for overtime and holiday work at rates determined by the Secretary.

Under current authorities, the Secretary is authorized to pay employees performing inspection under the FMIA for overtime work at rates the Secretary determines. However, no similar authority exists for employees performing inspection under the PPIA. Further, because current law caps overtime rates for Federal veterinarians working in poultry establishments, those at the higher steps of the Federal pay scale receive an hourly overtime rate less than their hourly rate of basic pay.

The draft bill will eliminate the potential inequity between FSIS veterinarians providing inspection services under the FMIA and the PPIA and will provide the Secretary with the authority to compensate appropriately FSIS veterinarians performing inspections in meat and poultry establishments.

Enactment of the legislation would cost FSIS approximately \$300,000 per year to cover situations when the veterinarian is on overtime but the establishment is not. The Department believes that it will be able to absorb these additional costs within current budgetary levels. When an establishment is in an overtime status, it must reimburse USDA for the overtime at rates determined by the Secretary.

Enactment of this proposed legislation would have no significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the presentation to Congress of this proposed legislation from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

A similar letter is being sent to the Speaker of the House.

Sincerely,

DAN GLICKMAN, *Secretary*.●

By Mr. COCHRAN:

S. 2508. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to impose conditions on the implementation of the interim payment system for home health services furnished by home health agencies under the Medicare Program and to modify the standards for calculating the per beneficiary payment limits under such payment system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

HOMEBOUND ELDERLY RELIEF OPPORTUNITY ACT
OF 1998

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the "Homebound Elderly Relief Opportunity Act of 1998"

(HERO). This measure addresses a very serious concern: the future of home care within the Medicare system.

For Mississippians, home health has had a two-fold benefit: Home care serves to reduce costly hospitalization stays while enhancing the patient's quality of life through continued stay in the familiar home setting.

Additionally, in a rural state like Mississippi, home health has enabled health care to be delivered to the immobile and elderly who are often miles and hours from the nearest hospital or clinic.

Despite these obvious benefits, home health is very expensive, however. With Medicare and government expenditures, it is not always a question of "What we should afford?" but "What we can afford?"

Congress answered these questions with the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, which has brought fiscal responsibility back to government. BBA 97 dealt with among other issues, Medicare, and in turn home health, probably the fastest growing expenditure within the program. The work of Senator ROTH and the Finance Committee has helped insure some stability in home health expenditures, so that a good thing does not quickly become a bad thing and bankrupt the trust fund. However, instead of saving this vital Medicare benefit, HCFA's application of the Balanced Budget Act to home health—through the use of the Interim Payment System—has threatened its very existence. In so doing, HCFA has ignored both equity and the elderly, particularly in rural America.

The Senate has not completely ignored the home health crisis: Sixty-eight of my colleagues have made statements which appear with their photographs on a recent industry poster proclaiming the ills of HCFA's interim payment system and its threat to the continuation of home health services.

Five of my colleagues—Senators GRASSLEY and BREAUX; Senator BOND; Senator COLLINS; and Senator KENNEDY have each introduced bills to adjust or eliminate IPS. Senator BOND has been the Senate champion of saving home health. His Senate Bill 2354, of which I am cosponsor, provides a direct, honest response to the HCFA-created nightmare. His bill would impose a moratorium on IPS from fiscal year 1998 forward until HCFA develops the prospective payment system, the only sure way to solve the home health expenditure issue in a fair manner. However, the Moratorium Bill's cost has been scored by CBO to be in the many many billions. While we must save home health, we cannot do so in a way that jeopardizes all of Medicare. We must find a compromise. That is the purpose of introducing HERO today.

The HERO Bill is an effort to correct the essential problems with the interim payment system and to create a better bridge to the prospective payment system which we all hope will be

developed and implemented soon. I believe it provides the best opportunity for success with respect to Government spending, Medicare reimbursement, and protecting beneficiaries.

It establishes budget limits for Medicare home health expenditures for 1999–2002 with the same savings levels currently projected by the Congressional Budget Office under the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 provisions. If expenditure estimates exceed the budget limits, payments to providers will be limited to regional levels on an equitable basis. Finally, it insures access to home care for all qualified Medicare beneficiaries.

Overall, this bill provides one last opportunity in this session for all home health beneficiaries to receive the Medicare benefit to which they are entitled and for the providers of those services to be fairly reimbursed. It corrects the essential flaw in the original payment reform which rewarded the inefficient and punished the efficient providers and failed to account for the variation in the types of patients served by home health agencies. However, this bill operates with budgetary and operational safeguards to insure that the home health benefit stays on its steady course.

Mr. President, Congress must reform IPS immediately before even more reputable home health agencies are forced out of business and more seniors are forced to go without care or leave their homes for more expensive hospital or nursing home care. I urge Senators to support this bill.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 38

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 38, a bill to reduce the number of executive branch political appointees.

S. 1081

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1081, a bill to enhance the rights and protections for victims of crime.

S. 1147

At the request of Mr. WELLSTONE, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1147, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for nondiscriminatory coverage for substance abuse treatment services under private group and individual health coverage.

S. 1301

At the request of Mr. GRAMS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1301, a bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to provide for consumer bankruptcy protection, and for other purposes.