

page of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs separately lists "Congressionally-Chartered Veterans Service Organizations" and "Other Veterans Service organizations and Military Associations" (<http://www.house.gov/va/vetlinks.htm>).

A congressional charter would prove an appropriate tribute to the selfless sacrifices and tireless work of their beloved Founder, Dr. Garcia, and the countless Hispanic Americans who have answered and continue to answer America's call to fight for and defend the freedom of all Americans. Having earned the highest number of medals of honor per capita, Hispanic Americans have a distinguished record of valor and patriotism.

Today, the American GI Forum has more than 500 chapters in the United States and Puerto Rico. Though predominately Hispanic, the AGIF is open to all veterans and their families. The organization is comprised of three elements—the Veterans Forum, the Women's Forum, and the Youth Forum. On a local level, American GI Forum chapters function under a regional and/or a state structure. The elected officers of each state organization serve as members of the National Board of Directors. The National Commander and other National officers are elected at our National Convention and are also members of the National Board of Directors.

The patriotism of this community, and their willingness to make daily sacrifices and even the ultimate sacrifice to preserve the freedoms we all enjoy is inspiring, and deserves our support, recognition and gratitude. On behalf of my colleagues and myself, I urge you to join us in sponsoring this legislation to grant a federal charter to this deserving organization.

By Mr. LEVIN:

S. 1760. A bill to amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act to clarify the term Great Lakes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

GREAT LAKES LEGISLATION

Mr. LEVIN. 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. 1760

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

After every place in the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1121 et seq.) where the term Great Lakes appears insert: "and Lake Champlain."

Strike section 203(5) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1122) and renumber the following paragraphs accordingly.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 61

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) was added as a cosponsor of S.

61, a bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to extend eligibility for veterans' burial benefits, funeral benefits, and related benefits for veterans of certain service in the United States merchant marine during World War II.

S. 411

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 411, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit for investment necessary to revitalize communities within the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1194

At the request of Mr. KYL, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1194, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to clarify the right of medicare beneficiaries to enter into private contracts with physicians and other health care professionals for the provision of health services for which no payment is sought under the medicare program.

S. 1305

At the request of Mr. GRAMM, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1305, a bill to invest in the future of the United States by doubling the amount authorized for basic scientific, medical, and pre-competitive engineering research.

S. 1325

At the request of Mr. FRIST, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1325, a bill to authorize appropriations for the Technology Administration of the Department of Commerce for fiscal years 1998 and 1999, and for other purposes.

S. 1391

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1391, a bill to authorize the President to permit the sale and export of food, medicines, and medical equipment to Cuba.

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1391, *supra*.

S. 1605

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ROBB) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1605, a bill to establish a matching grant program to help States, units of local government, and Indian tribes to purchase armor vests for use by law enforcement officers.

S. 1621

At the request of Mr. GRAMS, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1621, a bill to provide that certain Federal property shall be made available to States for State use before being made available to other entities, and for other purposes.

S. 1711

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1711, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to eliminate the marriage penalty tax, to increase the income levels for the 15 and 28 percent tax brackets, to provide a 1-year holding period for long-term capital gains, to index capital assets for inflation, to reduce the highest estate tax rate to 28 percent, and for other purposes.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. MACK, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1737, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a uniform application of the confidentiality privilege to taxpayer communications with federally authorized practitioners.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 78

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ROBB) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 78, a concurrent resolution relating to the indictment and prosecution of Saddam Hussein for war crimes and other crimes against humanity.

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, his name was added as a cosponsor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 78, *supra*.

AMENDMENT NO. 1397

At the request of Mr. BYRD, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1397 intended to be proposed to S. 1173, a bill to authorize funds for construction of highways, for highway safety programs, and for mass transit programs, and for other purposes.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH AND PREVENTION AMENDMENTS OF 1998

• Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I wish to express my support for S. 1722, "The Women's Health Research and Prevention Amendments of 1998." I commend Senator FRIST for his introduction of this legislation and am pleased to join him as a co-sponsor.

Women's health programs administered by the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention play a critical role in ensuring that the extraordinary scientific advances of our nation don't sit on the shelf, but are actually used to improve lives.

The last few years have brought astonishing new developments in women's health research. Medical researchers have now located the genetic mutations that predispose women to certain types of breast cancer—knowledge that may lead to more effective

treatment of this devastating disease. And through the CDC, a recent initiative focused on the prevention and early detection of breast and cervical cancer is already saving lives. In just the year since this program was begun in Connecticut, over 19,000 women received free screening for breast cancer—and 15 cases were caught early while they were still treatable. Over 1,000 women were checked for cervical cancer—and 8 cases were detected.

We've taken a number of important steps toward improving women's health, but we must continue to support and sustain these programs if we are to truly reap the benefits of our initial investments. This bill clearly is a good start.

I am concerned that some critical areas of women's health have been omitted from the bill. We would be remiss if issues so important to women's health, such as sexually transmitted diseases and reproductive health were neglected. However, I know that Senator FRIST has indicated his willingness to continue the dialogue and to work with members of the Labor Committee to include these programs prior to markup.

This legislation is the continuation of a commitment that we have made to women and our nation and makes a sound and intelligent investment in the long term health of this country. I again offer my support and urge swift consideration of this bill.●

NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

● Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, this month—March 1998—is National Eye Donor Month. The purpose of National Eye Donor Month is simple: It is to alert each and every American family to the terrific opportunity each of us has to make a difference in someone else's life.

Many Americans don't realize that they have it in their power to give somebody else the ability to see. But it's true. If you declare now that after your passing, you want your eyes to be donated to an eye bank, your eyes can become someone else's gift of sight.

Mr. President, this is a great opportunity. Indeed, it is a great responsibility—one that all of us should take very, very seriously.

According to the most recent statistics, over 4,000 Americans are waiting for a corneal transplant—an operation that can restore the gift of sight. These Americans could have this operation today—if only there were enough donated eyes available.

The purpose of National Eye Donor Month is to remind Americans that we can make those corneas available. Every year, thousands of Americans donate their eyes to eye banks. In 1996, over 87,000 eyes were donated—and over 43,000 transplants were performed.

Now, these numbers need some explaining. That seems like a pretty substantial disparity. But there's a good reason for it—a very strict screening

process that keeps out those who test positive with HIV, those who have hepatitis, and those with unhealthy cells on their corneas.

Those are just a few of the reasons why many corneas are unsuitable for transplantation. But the corneas from these donors are used. They are used in other very important ways. They are used for research and surgical training, and other medical education.

It's because of this screening process that I just described that eye transplant operations have such an incredible success rate—over 90 percent.

This screening process and this rate of success, however, require a greater number of donations. If we could increase the number of eyes donated to eye banks, we could take care of the 4,545 patients who are still waiting for corneal transplants today, as well as the 40,000 people who join their ranks every year.

Mr. President, as I said, this kind of surgery really works. In the 37 years since the founding of the Eye Bank Association of America, EBBA-member eye banks have made possible over half a million corneal transplants.

But there simply aren't enough eye donors. The only solution is public education—making the American people aware of what we can do to help out.

That's what National Eye Donor Month is all about. This month, let's recommit ourselves—as a nation—to giving the gift of sight to our fellow citizens.●

INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT, S. 1173

● Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on Thursday the Senate overwhelmingly approved reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). I want to take this opportunity to explain the benefits of this legislation for the State of Illinois.

First, let me offer my congratulations and also say thank you to Senators CHAFEE and BAUCUS for their extraordinary work in bringing this bill to the floor and shepherding it through in record time. The final product, S. 1173, reflects their diligent work and profound understanding of our nation's diverse transportation needs.

Illinois is a vitally important link in our nation's transportation system. My colleague, Senator CAROL MOSELEY-BRAUN, who has helped lead an important effort to improve this bill to reflect Illinois' needs, has referred to the State as the "Transportation Hub of the Nation." I couldn't agree more.

Illinois has the third largest Interstate system in the nation. It is a critical freight transfer point. The Chicago area boasts of the nation's largest intermodal hub. Illinois is also a passenger and freight rail hub. The State's ports handle the third largest amount of domestic waterborne traffic. Illinois' rivers are the fourth busiest in the nation. The Chicago Transit Authority

operates the nation's second largest public transportation system. And, of course, O'Hare International Airport is the busiest in the world.

Unfortunately, Illinois' urban roads have been rated as the second worst in the nation. And, the six-county Chicago region is considered the fifth most congested area in the U.S.

This ISTEA reauthorization is a good first step toward improving the conditions of Illinois' roads and bridges, properly funding mass transit in Chicago and downstate, alleviating congestion, and addressing highway safety and the environment.

The bill provides \$173 billion over six years for highway, highway safety, and other surface transportation programs. Illinois can expect to receive more than \$5.3 billion over six years from the highway formula, as well as from the high density and the bonus programs. That's a 29 percent increase or \$1.2 billion more than the ISTEA of 1991. Major reconstruction and rehabilitation projects like Downtown Chicago's Wacker Drive and the Stevenson Expressway (I-55) will be able to move forward thanks, in large part, to this legislation.

Mass transit funding is vitally important to the Chicago area as well as to so many downstate communities. It helps alleviate congestion and provides access to thousands of Illinoisans everyday. Under the Banking Committee title, Illinois can expect to receive \$2.1 billion over six years. A 40 percent increase or \$600 million more than the 1991 ISTEA. These important transit dollars will help the Chicago Transit Authority rehabilitate several lines, the METRA and PACE systems in Northeastern Illinois expand and improve their service areas, the Metro Link light rail system in St. Clair County complete an Illinois extension, and transit authorities throughout the state purchase and upgrade bus and bus facilities.

The Senate bill also preserves and expands some important environmental and enhancement programs, for example the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program and bicycle pedestrian facilities. CMAQ's goal is to help states meet their air quality conformity requirements as prescribed by the Clean Air Act. S. 1173 increases funding for CMAQ by 18 percent. Illinois can expect more than \$1 billion over six years under the program. S. 1173 also provides for increases in funds for transportation enhancement activities, such as bicycle pedestrian facilities and historic preservation.

This bill also contains a number of highway safety provisions. One of the most notable is the .08 amendment. Thanks to the efforts of Senators LAUTENBERG and DEWINE, S. 1173 contains a provision that would lower the legal blood-alcohol concentration level for drivers to .08. It's a law that Illinois has had on the books since July 1997. The provision could save as many as 600 lives a year.