

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, to conduct a hearing entitled "First, Do Not Harm: Improving Health Quality and Patient Safety" on May 5, 2011, at 10 a.m., in 430 Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 5, 2011, at 2:15 p.m. in room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled "Stolen Identities: The Impact of Racist Stereotypes on Indigenous People."

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on May 5, 2011, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

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

AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISASTER RECOVERY
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery and Intergovernmental Affairs of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 5, 2011, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, "Understanding the Power of Social Media as a Communication Tool in the Aftermath of Disasters."

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND
CAPABILITIES

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 5, 2011, at 9:45 a.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE,
CUSTOMS, AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on International Trade, Customs, and Global Competitiveness of the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 5, 2011, at 2 p.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Enforcing America's Trade Laws in the Face of Customs Fraud and Duty Evasion."

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

NOTICE: PUBLIC FINANCIAL
DISCLOSURE REPORTS

The filing date for the 2010 Public Financial Disclosure reports is Monday, May 16, 2011. Senators, political fund designees and staff members whose salaries exceed 120 percent of the GS-15 pay scale must file reports.

Public Financial Disclosure reports should be submitted to the Senate Office of Public Records, 232 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510.

The Public Records office will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the filing date to accept these filings. For further information, please contact the Public Records office.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JAMES MICHAEL
COLE TO BE DEPUTY ATTORNEY
GENERAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 62.

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

The clerk will report the nomination. The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of James Michael Cole, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Attorney General.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a cloture motion at the desk. I ask that it be reported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the clerk will report the motion.

The 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, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of James Michael Cole, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Attorney General.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Herb Kohl, Dianne Feinstein, Al Franken, Christopher A. Coons, Richard Blumenthal, Amy Klobuchar, Sheldon Whitehouse, Sherrod Brown, Mark Udall, Richard J. Durbin, Thomas R. Carper, Bernard Sanders, John D. Rockefeller IV, Jeanne Shaheen, Charles E. Schumer.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 61; that there be 3 hours of debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on Calendar No. 61; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

ADDITION OF CONFEREES—H.R. 658

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator ISAKSON be added as a conferee for the FAA reauthorization bill, H.R. 658.

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

CONGRATULATING THE STUDENTS,
PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND AD-
MINISTRATORS OF CHARTER
SCHOOLS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 158 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 158) congratulating the students, parents, teachers, and administrators of charter schools across the United States for ongoing contributions to education, and supporting the ideals and goals of the 12th annual National Charter Schools Week.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I rise to make a few brief remarks about the fact that this week we are celebrating National Charter Schools Week in America and in the Senate. I am pleased to join my colleague, LAMAR ALEXANDER, in cosponsoring this resolution, which I hope will be hotlined tonight, and that means passed unanimously without the need to bring it to the floor for debate because there are so many Members of the Senate, both Democrats and Republicans, who recognize the value of high-quality charter schools and the difference they are making in the advancement of education reform and the extraordinary achievements being reached by students and teachers in communities because of them.

I wish to make a brief statement on the Senate floor and then share some interesting and exciting statistics from my own experience in the city of New Orleans, which is the city that has the highest percentage of children in charter schools in America today.

As a parent of two precious and delightful children, I know firsthand the value of a quality education to secure their futures. Many American families are fortunate to live in places where public schools provide engaging and effective instruction and a culture of achievement that inspires students to aim high and thrive. Other families have the financial means to provide their children with a top-notch private school education. The Presiding Officer knows, whether it is in Missouri or Louisiana or Texas or right here in DC, that education can be quite expensive in our top private elementary and secondary schools in our country. Sometimes tuition can reach up to \$25,000 a year and beyond. As hard as that might be for some to believe, that is true. Unfortunately, too many Americans are left without either option for their children, and their children are falling through the cracks. This cannot continue if America is going to maintain a leadership role and produce young adults who have the knowledge and skills to compete and win in this new worldwide marketplace.

Fortunately, in a growing number of communities, including several in Louisiana and particularly in New Orleans, there is another exciting option for parents and students: high quality public charter schools.

This week, as I said, we celebrate the 12th annual National Charter School Week. It is a good time to take stock of how successful many charter schools have been and what we can do to replicate them across the country and, more importantly, what we can do to improve them; what we can do to eliminate poor charter schools and strengthen the great ones and make the good ones even better. Charter schools are public schools that receive public funding and serve the same neighborhood students as traditional public schools.

Currently, it may surprise people to know there are over 5,000 charter

schools in our country serving more than 1.6 million children. These schools are required to meet the academic student achievement accountability requirements under all of our laws and in the same manner as traditional public schools. However, they differ from traditional public schools in several important ways. Charter schools operate free from many of the district rules and regulations so they have more freedom to innovate, to experiment, to explore, to think outside of the box, to try new approaches. Charter schools have autonomy in areas such as the length of the school day and year, as well as principal and teacher recruitment, selection, and development. With this freedom, however, comes greater accountability for improved student achievement. Unlike public schools in many places, charter schools that aren't successful can actually lose their charter, be forced to close, or be forced to transition to a new model. There are countless examples of high-performing charter schools that are producing impressive results, and they continue to show that our students, including—and most importantly—our low-income and minority students and disadvantaged students can and are rising to great academic heights.

In my home State of Louisiana, there are 90 public charter schools, including 61 in the city of New Orleans, representing almost 72 percent of our city's student population—a higher proportion than any other school system in the United States. The city's Sci Academy is one remarkable example of a successful charter school, and I had the great pleasure to skype with some of their students earlier this morning.

Sci Academy opened in 2008 with 90 ninth graders entering a rigorous and inspiring environment. More than half of the ninth graders who entered Sci Academy's inaugural class had failed State promotional performance tests, and more than 70 percent read well below the ninth grade level. Many of these students had missed a full year of school because of Hurricane Katrina and were significantly behind other students of their age.

Incredibly, that same freshman class later scored 76 percent on our State's test, making it the third most successful high school in New Orleans. The other high schools that beat it out actually had selective enrollment. What is extraordinary about Sci Academy is that it is open enrollment, focusing on the quality of teachers and the quality of teaching. It is remarkable.

Right here in the District of Columbia—and I am proud to have had a hand in the development of this in the District of Columbia as a former chair of a subcommittee and a partner with ELLEANOR HOLMES NORTON and others who have worked so hard with the District on its reform efforts—charter schools are an integral part of improving educational outcomes in this city, our Nation's Capital.

Starting with two small campuses in 1996, DC public charter schools now educate almost 40 percent of the school-aged children in the District, and they are serving the highest percentage of low-income and minority students in the city's most economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. DC's public charter schools outperform the city's traditional public schools from the fifth grade up, and they graduate 84 percent of their students—higher than both the city and the national average.

Where quality charter schools exist, parents have real choices, exciting choices, and they are overwhelmingly choosing public charter schools. Many of these schools have long waiting lists. In fact, more than 50 percent of charter schools report having waiting lists, and the total number of students on these waiting lists is enough to fill more than 1,100 average-sized charter schools—quite a number on these waiting lists.

Over the past 17 years, Congress has provided \$1.6 billion in funding to the promising charter school movement throughout the country through grants for planning, program design, initial implementation, replication, expansion, dissemination, evaluation, and for improving facilities. Our efforts at the national level are beginning to show real results. Maintaining and increasing where possible funding for charter schools is a winning proposition for parents, for students, for their teachers, for our community, and, may I say, for our Nation, for our workforce of the future, and for our economic security.

Make no mistake. America will only go as far as our collective talent and ability will take her. Our future will continue to be shaped by how well we prepare today's students for tomorrow's challenges. Parents who are doing everything they can to give their children an opportunity for success deserve not only a quality choice but a solution to the challenges of our educational system. Successful charter schools provide that choice, and in many areas they provide the solution. Now it is time to make them a central component of our educational strategy all over the country.

Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER and I are pleased to chair the charter caucus in the Senate, to join with President Obama and Secretary Arne Duncan in a focus on quality education for all children in America. President Obama and Secretary Duncan often say charter schools are one tool, not the only tool, to get us from failing and mediocre public schools to great and exciting public schools in our country that are making a real difference.

I wish to share some extraordinary results that were given to me just this week as I hosted a roundtable with staffers and Senators about the accomplishments of charter schools. This comes from a wonderful group in New Orleans, New Schools for New Orleans,

that is one of the leaders in the charter school movement nationally. They are helping the city of New Orleans and many of our organizations, in partnership with all sorts of funders and philanthropies, and the city of New Orleans, the mayor, and the city council, and others who are so supportive of what is going on. Our universities, I might say, including the University of New Orleans, Tulane University, Dillard, and Xavier have also been on the forefront of this movement as well.

Let me share these results because they are quite extraordinary. This chart shows that in 2005, 62 percent of students in the city of New Orleans—not 15 percent, not 20 percent, but 62 percent—were academically unacceptable. Based on standards set by our State and by the Federal Government, in 2005 basically 62 percent of all the students in New Orleans were failing. They were not up to just basic educational levels in reading and math.

We had a terrible event happen, as many people will remember. In 2005 we had Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the crashing of our levee system, the failing of our levee system, and 100 of our 146 public schools were virtually destroyed and remain unusable. Through the great efforts of local leaders, State leaders, and Federal leaders, and with FEMA's help and some new, out-of-the-box thinking, we were able to pool the money the Federal Government was going to reimburse each individual school and present one check to the city of New Orleans and the school board and the recovery district, and we have been building a new school system ever since. Charter schools are the foundation of that rebuilding.

It is quite extraordinary that in only 5 years, when you look at the same population, virtually—there have been some families who have not yet come back, but they are on their way; there have been some families who left and are not coming back—it is a population still of a great number of minority students and disadvantaged and lower middle-class students, as well as middle-class and some wealthy students in our public school system, and we have moved from 62 percent unacceptable to only 17 percent unacceptable in 5 years. I do not know of any other group of schools anywhere in the country that has made such remarkable gains. So when people question, do charter schools work, let me say that the evidence is in. Quality charter schools work. In every place they exist, they outperform even their suburban counterparts and in large measure suburban counterpart public schools that are among some of the best.

Many of these charter schools are in rural areas where there is not a lot of opportunity for White, Black, Hispanic, or Asian kids. Some of them are in intercities that do not have the same opportunities.

We, again, have taken 62 percent of our population who were underperforming and now it is only 17 percent.

As it says on this chart, I have in the Chamber, the New Orleans students' test scores demonstrate the first significant improvement in the city's history—a 30-percent increase—and, finally, closing the achievement gap between New Orleans' schools and State schools by more than 50 percent.

A Thomas B. Fordham Institute study ranked 30 major cities on six critical reform categories. New Orleans, I am proud to say, was ranked the No. 1 reform-friendly city in the country, followed by Washington, DC, New York, Denver, and Jacksonville.

But the great news is that there are cities and counties and States waking up to the exciting opportunities of education reform. We know that in America today, it should be unacceptable in some of our communities where 50, 60, 70 percent of our children are failing to get out of high school. We should be ashamed that even when some of our children walk across that stage and get that diploma that signifies they have graduated, they are leaving truly, in many places, without the skills to get the job that will give them a living or saving wage because our schools have been handing out diplomas that are not worth the paper on which they are written. That has to come to an end. That is what we are fighting for. That is what charter schools help us to do.

Now, is it possible for public schools that are not charters to achieve this success? Yes. And that is also happening. But I found in my own experience, trying to work with a system that was unwilling to make too much change, that charter schools provide the kind of competition and spark and challenge to an otherwise system that is run by a monopoly. This provides a diverse set of providers to education. It encourages new kinds of educators to come in as teachers. It gives the schools the freedom they need to make it work for the students who walk through that front door and want so desperately to walk across that stage with a diploma that means something and a future ahead of them.

I am proud to help lead this effort here in the Senate. I thank my colleagues for supporting this effort for the 12th year—a resolution commending high-quality charter schools in America.

Let me say in conclusion that we are not resting on our laurels. I have introduced a bill, along with others. Senator DURBIN and Senator KIRK have introduced a companion bill, if you will. Both bills are in an effort to take the bar even higher, to say to the country: Let's get rid of our low-performing charter schools. Let's focus on strengthening the authorizers of these charter schools. We do not want authorizers out there who are giving out charters to run schools to people who have no idea what they are doing.

We do not want this movement to fail. We want this movement—we know it can be successful. We know it can be a real choice for parents. Think about

it. Think about the value of a quality education. If you have to pay for it in the private sector, you are paying \$25,000 to \$30,000 a year in some of our communities. Maybe you are lucky enough to be in a Catholic school, an Episcopal school, where the tuition is subsidized and you can get the student in and out for \$6,000 to \$10,000 a year, but for many families with four children or five children, that is out of reach. They cannot possibly afford that. So having quality public schools is essential in every community in our country.

I believe that if we can do this in New Orleans, which is one of the poorest cities—not the poorest, but we struggle, as you know, in the city of New Orleans; we have a very broad demographic population—if we can do it here, trust me, it can be done anywhere with political will and with the support of your State and local governments, and, of course, the Federal Government.

So I am pleased to cosponsor the ALL-STAR bill, which is a grant program for growth and replication of high-quality charter schools, and to have introduced my own bill, the Charter School Quality Act. I am going to be working very closely with Senator HARKIN, who has been open in many ways to these new ideas, and working with him as we authorize the Elementary and Secondary Act, and be reminded of the great success charter schools are having.

Ultimately, we would like to have 100 percent of the public schools in the city of New Orleans be charters, with some of the most exciting charter providers, some of the best in the world operating our schools, challenging our kids, giving parents real choices where they want to send their kids based on the personalities of the children and the desires and dreams of that family. That is really what America is all about—competition, choice, and opportunity. We just are not quite doing enough in this regard in our country today. But perhaps the success of this movement can show us a way forward.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I hope we can get that resolution adopted without further delay tonight. Again, I wish to congratulate everyone who has worked so hard on making this National Charter School Week a success here in DC, in our Nation's Capital, and around our country.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the amendment to the preamble which is at the desk be agreed to, the preamble, as amended, be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The amendment (No. 318) was agreed to, as follows:

Strike the 14th whereas clause.

The resolution (S. Res. 158) was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

S. RES. 158

Whereas charter schools deliver high-quality public education and challenge all students to reach their potential;

Whereas charter schools promote innovation and excellence in public education;

Whereas charter schools provide thousands of families with diverse and innovative educational options for their children;

Whereas charter schools are public schools authorized by a designated public entity that—

(1) respond to the needs of communities, families, and students in the United States; and

(2) promote the principles of quality, accountability, choice, and innovation;

Whereas in exchange for flexibility and autonomy, charter schools are held accountable by their sponsors for improving student achievement and for the financial and other operations of the charter schools;

Whereas 40 States, the District of Columbia, and Guam have passed laws authorizing charter schools;

Whereas in 2011, close to 5,000 charter schools are serving more than 1,600,000 children;

Whereas in the past 17 fiscal years, Congress has provided a total of more than \$2,600,000,000 in financial assistance to the charter school movement through grants for planning, program design, initial implementation, replication, expansion, dissemination, evaluation, and facilities;

Whereas numerous charter schools improve the achievements of students and stimulate improvement in traditional public schools;

Whereas charter schools are required to meet the student achievement accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) in the same manner as traditional public schools;

Whereas charter schools often set higher and additional individual goals than the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) to ensure that charter schools are of high quality and truly accountable to the public;

Whereas charter schools—

(1) give parents the freedom to choose public schools;

(2) routinely measure parental satisfaction levels; and

(3) must prove their ongoing success to parents, policymakers, and the communities served by the charter schools;

Whereas more than 50 percent of charter schools report having a waiting list, and the total number of students on all such waiting lists is enough to fill more than 1,100 average-sized charter schools;

Whereas the 12th annual National Charter Schools Week is scheduled to be held May 1, through May 7, 2011: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the students, parents, teachers, and administrators of charter schools across the United States for—

(A) ongoing contributions to education;

(B) the impressive strides made in closing the persistent academic achievement gap in the United States; and

(C) improving and strengthening the public school system in the United States;

(2) supports the ideals and goals of the 12th annual National Charter Schools Week, a week-long celebration to be held May 1 through May 7, 2011, in communities throughout the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to hold appropriate programs, cere-

monies, and activities during National Charter Schools Week to demonstrate support for charter schools.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed en bloc to the following resolutions which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 166, 167, 168, and 169.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

S. RES. 168

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased the Senate has once again passed a resolution commemorating our Nation's law enforcement officers and National Peace Officers Memorial Day. The Senate's official recognition of National Peace Officers Memorial Day is a tradition I am proud to support each year.

In 2010, 158 law enforcement officers died while serving in the line of duty. We honor their memory. Each year, we commemorate the bravery of the many law enforcement officers and peace officers who deserve our thanks and support. National Peace Officers Memorial Day is an opportunity to recommit ourselves to provide them with the tools they need to stay safe and to do their jobs as effectively as they can.

There are more than 900,000 men and women at work protecting our communities, our schools, and our children. They investigate and apprehend the most violent criminals and strive to keep our communities safe and secure. Since the first recorded police death in 1792, the names of 18,983 law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice have been added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

National Peace Officers Memorial Day provides the people of the United States, in their communities, in their State capitals, and in the Nation's Capital, with the opportunity to honor and reflect on the extraordinary service and sacrifice year after year by those members of our police forces. More than 20,000 peace officers are expected to gather in Washington in the days leading up to May 15 to join with the families of their fallen comrades. It is right that the Senate show its respect on this occasion, and I am proud to honor their service and their memory.

S. RES. 169

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this resolution concerns a request for testimony and documents in an action before the Merit Systems Protection Board brought by the Social Security Administration against an administrative law judge in SSA. Among the matters for which SSA has brought this action against the administrative law judge is conduct by that administrative judge during a visit with staff in the office of Senator LANDRIEU in April 2009.

Counsel for the administrative law judge against whom the action is brought has subpoenaed for deposition

two employees of Senator LANDRIEU's office and also sought by subpoena the production of documents from Senator LANDRIEU's office.

Senator LANDRIEU would like to cooperate and make the employees available for depositions. Accordingly, this resolution would authorize Sherae Hunter and Wes Kungel, the subpoenaed employees in Senator LANDRIEU's office, to testify at depositions in this matter. The resolution would also authorize production of relevant documents sought by subpoena, except where a privilege should be asserted, and would authorize representation by the Senate Legal Counsel of the two subpoenaed employees.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, that there be no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to these matters be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

The resolutions, with their preambles, read as follows:

S. RES. 166

(Commemorating May 8, 2011, as the 66th anniversary of V-E Day, the end of World War II in Europe)

Whereas on December 11, 1941, 4 days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States;

Whereas on November 8, 1942, United States and Allied forces began Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa;

Whereas German and other Axis forces in North Africa surrendered on May 13, 1943;

Whereas in July of 1943, United States and Allied forces landed in Sicily;

Whereas on September 8, 1943, Italy surrendered to United States and Allied forces, although German troops in Italy continued to fight until May of 1945;

Whereas more than 150,000 Allied soldiers landed in France on June 6, 1944, known thereafter as "D-Day";

Whereas on August 25, 1944, United States and Allied forces liberated Paris;

Whereas from mid- to late- December, during the Battle of the Bulge, United States troops heroically resisted a major German offensive in Belgium and France;

Whereas United States troops crossed the Rhine River at Remagen on March 7, 1945;

Whereas Germany surrendered unconditionally to the Western Allies at Reims on May 7, 1945, and to the Soviet Union on May 9, 1945, in Berlin;

Whereas during World War II, an estimated 292,000 members of the United States Armed Forces were killed in action and more than 400,000 members of the United States Armed Forces died; and

Whereas United States President Harry S. Truman declared May 8, 1945, "V-E day", the end of World War II in Europe, although war with Japan continued until August 14, 1945: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the historic contribution made by United States veterans of World War II to human liberty and the safety of the United States and its allies;

(2) honors veterans who served in the European Theatre of Operations and elsewhere during World War II;