

similar to ones that Senator CRAPO and I introduced in the 110th and 111th Congresses. I am grateful for Senator CRAPO's continued leadership on this issue, as well as the cosponsorship of our Finance Committee colleagues, Senators KERRY, SNOWE, CARDIN, and GRASSLEY.

Municipal bonds have long played an essential role in financing the construction, expansion, and repair of schools; highways, roads, and bridges; affordable housing; hospitals; public transit; water and sewage systems; and community-owned utilities. Since the enactment of the Federal income tax in 1913, Congress has supported the municipal bond market by exempting municipal bond interest from taxation. Tax exemption confers Federal assistance on State and local capital investments; it also recognizes that decisions about which projects to fund are most appropriately made at the State or local level.

Historically, banks were significant purchasers of tax-exempt debt. But the Tax Reform Act of 1986 severely curtailed banks' participation by automatically disallowing deductions for interest expense whenever municipal bonds are purchased. The 1986 Act left an exception only for bonds purchased from smaller municipalities, those selling no more than \$10 million of bonds each year. But because the \$10 million level was not indexed to inflation, its purchasing power has eroded significantly since 1986, leaving many smaller governments and non-profit educational and health care facilities either to defer projects to comply with this low limit or find non-bank purchasers.

I was very pleased that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act incorporated a bill that Senator CRAPO and I introduced, the Municipal Bond Market Support Act of 2009, raising the \$10 million small issuer exception to \$30 million. Additionally, the Recovery Act included a provision ensuring that the small issuer is made applicable at the ultimate borrower level, so that bonds benefiting non-profit universities and hospitals will not exceed the limitation merely because they issue bonds through statewide authorities.

Taken together, those steps significantly enhanced demand for debt issued by small municipal governments, enabling municipalities across the Nation, and particularly those in small and rural communities, to finance the critical infrastructure projects that play an important role in growing our national economy.

In 2009, the dollar amount of bank qualified issuances reached \$32.7 billion, double the prior year's level, with more than 6,000 issuances. Beneficiaries included a broad range of counties, cities, and school districts in all corners of my home state of New Mexico. For instance, the proceeds of a \$17 million bond issued by Santa Fe County financed roads, trails and parks for open space, a fire facility, a solid waste

transfer station, water rights acquisition and water projects. The City of Artesia completed two bank-qualified transactions, to finance building a public safety complex and a new waste water treatment facility. The Bloomfield School District placed \$19 million in bank-qualified debt to finance capital expenditures. Similarly, in 2010, issuances climbed even further, to \$36.8 billion, with more than 6,700 issuances representing a similarly diverse array of counties, cities, school districts, infrastructure districts, and hospitals across my home state of New Mexico and the country.

The ARRA-enacted provisions helped small communities across New Mexico and the country finance critical infrastructure needs and create jobs. The higher bank-qualified limit is a great success and deserves to be made permanent. The bill that Senators CRAPO, KERRY, SNOWE, CARDIN, GRASSLEY, and I are introducing today would do just that, ensuring that smaller governments and non-profit educational and health care facilities can finance their capital needs, particularly in periods of tight credit, and save taxpayer dollars.

At least 14 national organizations representing issuers of tax-exempt bonds are supporting the Act. These include the American Hospital Association; American Public Power Association; Council of Development Finance Authorities; Council of Infrastructure Financing Authorities; Government Finance Officers Association; International City/County Management Association; International Municipal Lawyers Association; National Association of College and University Business Officers; National Association of Counties; National Association of Health and Educational Facilities Finance Authorities; National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers, and Treasurers; National Association of State Treasurers; National League of Cities; and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. I urge my colleagues to join these organizations in supporting our bill, to ensure that small municipalities across the country are able to finance critical infrastructure projects at reduced costs to their residents.

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

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

S. 1016

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Municipal Bond Market Support Act of 2011".

SEC. 2. PERMANENT MODIFICATION OF SMALL ISSUER EXCEPTION TO TAX-EXEMPT INTEREST EXPENSE ALLOCATION RULES FOR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

(a) PERMANENT INCREASE IN LIMITATION.—Subparagraphs (C)(i), (D)(i), and (D)(iii)(II) of section 265(b)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 are each amended by striking "\$10,000,000" and inserting "\$30,000,000".

(b) PERMANENT MODIFICATION OF OTHER SPECIAL RULES.—Paragraph (3) of section 265(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by redesignating clauses (iv), (v), and (vi) of subparagraph (G) as clauses (ii), (iii), and (iv) of such subparagraph, respectively, and

(2) by striking so much of subparagraph (G) as precedes such clauses and inserting the following:

“(G) QUALIFIED 501(c)(3) BONDS TREATED AS ISSUED BY EXEMPT ORGANIZATION.—In the case of a qualified 501(c)(3) bond (as defined in section 145), this paragraph shall be applied by treating the 501(c)(3) organization for whose benefit such bond was issued as the issuer.

“(H) SPECIAL RULE FOR QUALIFIED FINANCINGS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a qualified financing issue—

“(I) subparagraph (F) shall not apply, and

“(II) any obligation issued as a part of such issue shall be treated as a qualified tax-exempt obligation if the requirements of this paragraph are met with respect to each qualified portion of the issue (determined by treating each qualified portion as a separate issue which is issued by the qualified borrower with respect to which such portion relates).”.

(c) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—Paragraph (3) of section 265(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended by subsection (b), is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(I) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—In the case of any calendar year after 2011, the \$30,000,000 amounts contained in subparagraphs (C)(i), (D)(i), and (D)(iii)(II) shall each be increased by an amount equal to—

“(i) such dollar amount, multiplied by

“(ii) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for such calendar year, determined by substituting ‘calendar year 2010’ for ‘calendar year 1992’ in subparagraph (B) thereof.

Any increase determined under the preceding sentence shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$100,000.”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to obligations issued after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 186—HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY FIELD ARTILLERY SCHOOL AT FORT SILL, OKLAHOMA

Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. COBURN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 186

Whereas May 19, 2011, has been set aside as Field Artillery Day at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, the Home of the Field Artillery, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the School of Fire for the Field Artillery;

Whereas the School of Fire for the Field Artillery at Fort Sill was established on June 5, 1911, under the command of Captain Dan T. Moore, its first commandant;

Whereas the first class of 14 captains and 22 non-commissioned officers arrived on September 15, 1911, and the school continues to operate today as the world renowned United States Army Field Artillery School;

Whereas thousands of soldiers, Marines, and allied foreign military students have

been trained for service in the Field Artillery at the United States Army Field Artillery School;

Whereas the Field Artillery lives up to its nickname, "The King of Battle", by continuing to be the most responsive all-weather fire support available to ground forces engaged in combat;

Whereas the modern Field Artillery branch employs, and the United States Army Field Artillery School trains troops on, a variety of powerful weapons, from the 105 millimeter M-199 howitzer, the 155 millimeter M-777 lightweight howitzer, and the 155 millimeter Paladin self-propelled howitzer to the Multiple Launch Rocket System;

Whereas the United States Army Field Artillery School has trained Field Artillery officers and non-commissioned officers to be the Army's experts on the employment of lethal and non-lethal effects that have contributed to our Nation's successes in Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas Field Artillery officers stand among our Nation's most revered civilian and military leaders, including founding fathers and Revolutionary War officers Alexander Hamilton and Henry Knox; Major General William J. Snow, the first Chief of the Field Artillery; Captain Harry S. Truman of the Missouri National Guard; Generals Jack Vessey, John Shalikashvili, and Maxwell Taylor, Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Generals William Westmoreland, Carl Vuono, and Dennis Reimer, Chiefs of Staff of the Army; General Tommy Franks, U.S. Central Command Commander who led coalition forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom; and General Raymond Odierno, U.S. Joint Forces Command Commander, who led Multi-National Forces-Iraq;

Whereas Field Artillerymen have fought with courage, strength, and fidelity in every United States conflict, and have been awarded more than 90 Medals of Honor, including, most recently, a Medal of Honor awarded posthumously to Sergeant First Class Jared Monti, a forward observer in Afghanistan who demonstrated conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity as he called in artillery fire to save his outnumbered patrol and was mortally wounded as he attempted to save a fellow soldier; and

Whereas the people of the United States take great pride in the history of Fort Sill, the United States Army Field Artillery School, and the continuing critical role that the Field Artillery plays in the defense of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the 100th anniversary of the United States Army Field Artillery School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma; and

(2) honors the long line of men and women of the Army Field Artillery who have served and continue to serve in the protection of the national security of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 187—SUPPORTING NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH AWARENESS IN ORDER TO BRING ATTENTION TO THE SEVERE HEALTH DISPARITIES FACED BY MINORITY POPULATIONS SUCH AS AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES, ASIANS, BLACKS OR AFRICAN AMERICANS, HISPANICS OR LATINOS, AND NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDERS

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. BEGICH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 187

Whereas many minority populations disproportionately experience health care barriers, exposure to environmental hazards, mortality, morbidity, behavioral risk factors, disability status, and unique social determinants of health;

Whereas the expected increase in minority populations in the near future will impact the entire health system of the United States, making the collective improved health of minority populations even more critical to the Nation;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services has identified 6 main categories in which racial and ethnic minorities experience the most disparate access and health outcomes, including infant mortality, cancer screening and management, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS infection, and immunizations;

Whereas according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African-American, American Indian, and Puerto Rican infants have higher mortality rates than White infants;

Whereas African-American women are more than twice as likely to die of cervical cancer than White women and are more likely to die of breast cancer than women of any other racial or ethnic group;

Whereas in 2006, among adults older than 44, the rate of death from coronary heart disease was 20 percent higher among African Americans than among Whites, and the death rate from stroke was 48 percent higher among African Americans than among Whites;

Whereas in 2008, as compared to non-Hispanic Whites, African American adults were 6 times more likely to have medically-diagnosed diabetes, Hispanics were 1.5 times more likely to have medically-diagnosed diabetes, and Asians were 1.2 times more likely to have medically-diagnosed diabetes;

Whereas African Americans and Hispanics represented only 27 percent of the United States population in 2008, but accounted for an estimated 68 percent of adult AIDS diagnoses and 71 percent of estimated pediatric AIDS diagnoses in 2008;

Whereas in 2008, Hispanics and African Americans age 65 and older were less likely than non-Hispanic Whites to report having received influenza and pneumococcal vaccines;

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives have a life expectancy that is 5.2 years less than the life expectancy of the population of the United States overall;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services has identified diseases of the heart, malignant neoplasm, unintentional injuries, diabetes, and cerebrovascular disease as the 5 leading causes of death among American Indians and Alaska Natives;

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives die at higher rates than other people in the United States from tuberculosis, diabetes, unintentional injuries, and suicide; and

Whereas health care experts, policymakers and tribal leaders are seeking to address the disproportionate disease burden and lower life expectancy for the American Indian and Alaska Native people by examining various factors that contribute to health status: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports national minority health awareness in order to bring attention to the severe health disparities faced by minority populations such as American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 17, 2011, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Oversight and Reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank of the United States."

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 17, 2011, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 17, 2011, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Financing 21st Century Infrastructure."

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 17, 2011, at 9:30 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled, "Strategic Implications of Pakistan and the Region."

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 17, 2011, at 2:15 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. LIEBERMAN. 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 on May 17, 2011, at 2:30 p.m. in room SD-430 of the Senate Dirksen Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "A Nation Prepared: Strengthening Medical and Public Health Preparedness and Response."

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 17, 2011, at 3:30 p.m.