

October 26, 2011, as “Day of the Deployed”.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 1625. A bill to restore the financial solvency of the United States Postal Service and to ensure the efficient and affordable nationwide delivery of mail; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I rise to introduce the Postal Reform Act of 2011, which will restore the financial health and long-term viability of the United States Postal Service, USPS. This bill is the companion to the bill Representative ISSA introduced in the House of Representatives in June of this year. I would like to thank him for his leadership on this important issue.

According to the USPS, by 2020, they are expecting to face up to a \$238 billion shortfall. Even with dramatic cost savings of \$12 billion and workforce reduction of 110,000 postal employees in the past four years, the Postal Service is expected to end this fiscal year with a \$10 billion loss.

First-Class mail, which makes up more than half of the Postal Service revenues, continues to fall at alarming rates and shows no signs of ever recovering. This combined with 80 percent labor costs and labor contracts that contain “no-layoff” clauses points to the fact that the Postal Service is broken.

Congress can no longer enact temporary fixes that avert financial crisis for only a brief period. Congress, the Postal Service, labor unions, and the mailing community must be willing to lay everything on the table and make hard choices now to save the Postal Service for the future. I believe the Postal Reform Act of 2011 will do just that.

Two key provisions in this bill alone would save the Postal Service billions of dollars annually. First, the bill would create a Postal Service Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority, which is modeled after the District of Columbia control board Congress created to address the fiscal crises the city was facing in the mid 1990s. This authority, triggered by a USPS default on its Federal obligations, would replace the Postal Board of Governors with mandates to cut costs, and put the USPS back on the path to financial solvency.

The second key provision would create a Commission on Postal Reorganization that would use a BRAC like process to consolidate and close post offices and mail processing facilities. According to the Postal Service the “current mail processing network has a capacity of over 250 billion pieces of mail per year when mail volume is now 160 billion pieces of mail. Right-sizing the network is vital to the future of the Postal Service and its customers.”

Congress, however, continues to put up political road blocks that prevent these closings and consolidations. This proposal will take the politics out of the process and allow the USPS to right-size its operations.

Other provisions in the bill would require arbitrators to take into account the financial health of the Postal Service if labor contracts move to arbitration. It would also exempt USPS from the Davis-Bacon Act, the Service Contract Act, and other wage rules that increase USPS contracting costs.

The bill would require certain types of mail that Postal Service loses money on to cover their cost. In Fiscal year 2010, USPS lost nearly \$1.7 billion on these type of “underwater” postal products that failed to cover their costs. For example, the Periodicals class of mail, which includes newspapers and magazines, has not covered its costs for 14 consecutive years, generating total losses of \$4.3 billion over that period.

The bill also contains common sense language that would mandate that USPS employees pay the same health and life insurance premium percentage as other Federal workers. This is estimated to save the Postal Service \$700 million annually.

Finally, this bill will allow the Postal Service to move to 5-day delivery, at a savings of anywhere from \$1.7 to \$3.1 billion annually.

We can no longer choose to support temporary fixes to the Postal Service. If we continue to act in this irresponsible way, the American taxpayer will be the one that ultimately suffers in the form of higher postage prices and taxpayer bailouts. We must make hard choices now so future generations of Americans will have a viable Postal Service.

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. COONS):

S. 1628. A bill to provide for improvements in the Federal hiring process, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today, along with Senators CARPER, CARDIN, and COONS, I am introducing the Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act of 2011. This bill will help agencies fix the broken recruitment and hiring process in the Federal Government. I am pleased that Representative SARBANES is also introducing a companion bill in the House today and I thank him for his work and his commitment to the Federal workforce.

Every day, talented people interested in working for their government are turned away from Federal service because of the frustrating and antiquated hiring process. Too many Federal agencies have built barriers for new workers, done too little to recruit the right candidates, and invented an evaluation process that discourages qualified candidates.

In the past, many agencies have tried to find exceptions to the competitive hiring process, rather than making sure the competitive process works. The competitive hiring process should be our most effective tool to ensure that the Federal workforce is composed of the most qualified and able individuals, who are appointed through a fair and open process that is free from political interference. As agencies face budget reductions and restricted hiring, it is critical that they are able to attract top-notch candidates who are up to the challenge of meeting agency missions with limited resources. We must strengthen the competitive hiring process so that agencies do not look for ways to avoid it.

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, I have held multiple hearings on the hiring process and worked closely with the administration on its reform efforts. While the administration has been making some good progress, we still hear stories of talented individuals who seek employment with the Federal Government, only to grow frustrated with the archaic hiring process and find work elsewhere.

Applying for a job in the Federal Government should be accessible and straightforward. Agencies still require too much information upfront from candidates instead of an approach that requires more information as the employee moves through the process. The Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act will require agencies to streamline their hiring practices. Agencies will be required to stop using the dreaded “knowledge, skills, and ability” essays and accept resumes and cover letters, as is standard in the private sector. Additionally, the bill requires job postings to be written in plain writing, so that candidates can readily understand what the job is and how to apply, and candidates would be notified of their status at key points in the process. Agencies will have to speed their hiring processes to average no more than 80 days.

Agencies need to continuously reassess their needs and strategies in order to maximize their recruitment and hiring efforts. This bill requires agencies to develop strategic workforce plans that include hiring projections and identify critical skills gaps. It also requires agencies to measure the effectiveness of hiring efforts and reforms.

The Federal Government is the largest employer in the United States, and Federal service is a noble profession. Within the next 5 years, the Federal Government is expected to face one of the largest retirement waves in the Nation’s history, making the development of a new generation of workers even more vital. Agency leadership must make reforming the recruitment and hiring process a top priority. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

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. 1628

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 “Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act of 2011”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION.

In this Act, the term “agency”—

(1) means an Executive agency as defined under section 105 of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) shall not include the Government Accountability Office.

SEC. 3. STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act and in every subsequent year, the head of each agency, in consultation with the Office of Personnel Management and the Office of Management and Budget, shall develop a strategic workforce plan as part of the agency performance plan required under section 1115 of title 31, United States Code, to include—

(A) hiring projections, including occupational and grade level;

(B) long-term and short-term strategic human capital planning to address critical skills deficiencies;

(C) recruitment strategies to attract highly qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds;

(D) streamlining the hiring process to conform with the provisions in this Act; and

(E) a specific analysis of the contractor workforce, whether the balance between work being performed by the Federal workforce and the contractor workforce should be adjusted, and the capacity of the agency to manage employees who are not Federal employees and are doing the work of the Government.

(2) INCLUSION IN PERFORMANCE PLAN.—Section 1115(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) include the strategic workforce plan developed under section 3 of the Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act of 2011.”.

(b) HIRING PROJECTIONS.—Agencies shall make hiring projections made under strategic workforce plans available to the public, including on agency websites.

(c) SUBMISSION TO THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT.—Each agency strategic workforce plan shall be submitted to the Office of Personnel Management.

(d) GOVERNMENTWIDE STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLAN.—Based on the agency plans submitted under subsection (a), the Office of Personnel Management shall—

(1) develop a governmentwide strategic workforce plan updated at least annually to include the contents described under subsection (a)(1) on a governmentwide basis; and

(2) make such plan available to the President, Congress, and the public.

SEC. 4. FEDERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS OF VACANT POSITIONS.

(a) TARGETED ANNOUNCEMENTS.—In consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, the head of each agency shall—

(1) take steps necessary to identify highly qualified applicant pools with diverse back-

grounds before posting announcements of vacant positions;

(2) seek to develop relationships with targeted and diverse applicant pools to encourage applications for high-quality applicants; and

(3) post announcements of vacant positions for a reasonable period of time.

(b) PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of subsection (a) shall not supersede public notice requirements.

(c) PLAIN WRITING REQUIREMENT.—

(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term “plain writing” has the meaning given under section 3 of the Plain Writing Act of 2010 (5 U.S.C. 301 note).

(2) REQUIREMENT.—All Federal announcements of vacant positions for competitive positions shall be written in plain writing in accordance with the Plain Writing Act of 2010 (5 U.S.C. 301 note).

(d) CONTACT INFORMATION.—Announcements of vacant positions shall include contact information for applicants to seek further information.

SEC. 5. APPLICATION PROCESS AND NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.

(a) APPLICATION PROCESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act and in consultation with the Office of Personnel Management and the Office of Management and Budget, the head of each agency shall ensure that processes are implemented to—

(1) ensure that positions that are on the announcements of vacant positions are open for a reasonable period of time as determined by the head of the agency to allow applicants from diverse backgrounds time to submit an application;

(2) allow applicants to submit a cover letter, resume, and answers to brief questions, such as questions relating to United States citizenship and veterans status, to complete an initial application;

(3) not require lengthy writing requirements such as knowledge, skills, and ability essays as part of an initial application;

(4) allow applicants to submit application materials in a variety of formats, including word processing documents and portable document format;

(5) not require any applicant to provide a social security number or any other personal identifying information unnecessary for the initial review of an applicant for a position;

(6) not require the submission of additional material in support of an application, such as educational transcript, proof of veterans status, and professional certifications, unless necessary to complete the hiring process;

(7) provide for a valid, position-related assessment process to help identify the best candidates for the position to be filled and which does not place an unreasonable burden upon applicants;

(8) ensure that applicants are given a reasonable amount of time after the closing date of the announcement of a vacant position to provide additional necessary information; and

(9) include the hiring manager in all parts of the hiring process, including—

(A) targeted recruitment;

(B) drafting the announcement of the vacant position;

(C) review of the initial applications;

(D) interviewing the applicants; and

(E) the final decisionmaking process.

(b) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, the head of each agency shall ensure there are mechanisms under which each applicant for a vacant position shall receive timely notification of the status of each application or provide the applicant the ability to check on the status of each application.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—A timely notification to an applicant under this subsection shall be made upon—

(A) receipt of an application by the employing agency;

(B) determination of the qualification of the applicant for the position;

(C) referral to the selecting official, or when a decision is made not to refer the applicant; and

(D) selection of an applicant.

(3) APPLICANTS NOT SELECTED.—The agency shall notify any applicant who is not offered employment that the applicable position is not open, not later than 10 business days after the date on which—

(A) the selected candidate has accepted an offer of employment; or

(B) the announcement of the vacant position has been cancelled.

SEC. 6. AGENCY HIRING PROCEDURES.

(a) ELIMINATION OF THE RULE OF THREE; MULTIPLE SELECTIONS FROM ONE CERTIFICATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking section 3317 and inserting the following:

“§ 3317. Competitive service; certification and selection using numerical ratings

“(a) CERTIFICATIONS.—The Office of Personnel Management, or an agency to which the Office has delegated examining authority under section 1104(a)(2), shall certify a sufficient number of names from the top of the appropriate register or list of eligibles for an appointing authority who has requested a certificate of eligibles to consider when filling a position in the competitive service.

“(b) SELECTIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—An appointing authority shall select for appointment from the eligibles available for appointment on the certificate provided under subsection (a), unless objection to 1 or more of the individuals certified is made to, and sustained by, the Office of Personnel Management or the relevant agency for proper and adequate reason.

“(2) OTHER APPOINTING AUTHORITIES.—Not later than 240 days after the date of issuance of a certificate under subsection (a), other appointing authorities may select from that certificate for similar positions in the same occupational series and at the same grade level without any additional posting under section 3327.

“(c) PREFERENCE ELIGIBLES.—

“(1) PASS OVERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If an appointing authority proposes to pass over a preference eligible on a certificate in order to select an individual who is not a preference eligible, that appointing authority shall submit a statement of reasons to the Office of Personnel Management for passing over the preference eligible.

“(B) REASONS FOR PASS OVERS.—

“(i) RECORD.—The Office shall make the reasons submitted by the appointing authority part of the record of the preference eligible and may require the submission of more detailed information from the appointing authority in support of the passing over of the preference eligible.

“(ii) REVIEW.—The Office shall—

“(I) review the reasons submitted by the appointing authority; and

“(II) determine the sufficiency or insufficiency of the reasons, taking into account any response received by the Office from the preference eligible based on the reasons made available under or paragraph (3).

“(C) FINDINGS.—After the Office has completed the review under subparagraph (B) of the proposed passover, the Office shall send its findings to the appointing authority and to the preference eligible. The appointing authority shall comply with the findings of the Office.

“(2) PREFERENCE ELIGIBLES.—In the case of a preference eligible not described under paragraph (3)(A), upon the request of that preference eligible (or the representative of that preference eligible) the Office of Personnel Management shall provide a copy of—

“(A) the reasons for the proposed pass over submitted by the appointing authority under paragraph (1)(A); and

“(B) the findings of the Office under paragraph (1)(C).

“(3) PREFERENCE ELIGIBLES WITH CERTAIN DISABILITIES.—

“(A) NOTIFICATIONS.—In the case of a preference eligible described under section 2108(3)(C) who has a compensable service-connected disability of 30 percent or more, the appointing authority shall provide notification to the preference eligible of—

“(i) the proposed pass over;

“(ii) the reasons for the proposed pass over; and

“(iii) the right of the preference eligible to respond to those reasons to the Office of Personnel Management or the relevant agency not later than 15 days after the date of the receipt of the notification.

“(B) TIMING OF NOTIFICATIONS.—The appointing authority shall provide notification to the preference eligible under subparagraph (A) at the same time the appointing authority provides notification to the Office of Personnel Management under paragraph (1).

“(C) DEMONSTRATION OF NOTIFICATIONS.—Before completing the review under paragraph (1) with respect to a preference eligible described under section 2108(3)(C) who has a compensable service-connected disability of 30 percent or more, the Office shall require a demonstration by the appointing authority that a timely notification under subparagraph (A) was sent to the last known address of the preference eligible.

“(4) NONDELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS.—In the case of a preference eligible described under paragraph (3), the functions of the Office of Personnel Management under this subsection may not be delegated.

“(d) REEMPLOYMENT.—If the names of preference eligibles are on a reemployment list appropriate for the position to be filled, a nominating or appointing authority may appoint from a register of eligibles established after examination only an individual who qualifies as a preference eligible under section 2108(3)(C) through (G).

“(e) REGULATIONS.—The Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe regulations to carry out this section, including regulations for the establishment of mechanisms, such as advanced determination of score, for identifying the eligibles who will be considered for appointment.”.

(2) COMPETITIVE SERVICE; SELECTION FROM CERTIFICATES.—

(A) REPEAL.—Section 3318 of title 5, United States Code, is repealed.

(B) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3304(a)(3) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “3318” and inserting “3317”.

(3) COMPETITIVE SERVICE; SELECTION USING CATEGORY RATING.—Section 3319 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking the section heading and inserting the following:

“§ 3319. Competitive service; selection using category rating”;

(B) in subsection (c)(2) by striking “section 3317(b) or 3318(b)” and inserting “section 3317(c)”;

(C) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively; and

(D) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

“(d) Not later than 240 days after the date a certificate under this section is issued,

other appointing authorities may select from that certificate for similar positions in the same occupational series and at the same grade level in accordance with subsection (c) without any additional posting under section 3327.”.

(4) EXCEPTED SERVICE; GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; SELECTION.—Section 3320 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “sections 3308-3318” and inserting “sections 3308 through 3319”.

(b) REPORTING AND POSTING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.—

(1) GOVERNMENTWIDE LIST OF VACANT POSITIONS.—Section 3330 of title 5, United States Code, is repealed.

(2) CIVIL SERVICE POSITIONS LIST.—Chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking section 3327 and inserting the following:

“§ 3327. Civil service positions list

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘agency’—

“(A) means an Executive agency as defined under section 105; and

“(B) includes the Government Printing Office; and

“(2) the term ‘covered position’ means a position—

“(A) in the competitive service (other than a position established for a period not exceeding 18 months); or

“(B) a position in the Senior Executive Service.

“(b) VACANT COVERED POSITIONS.—Subject to regulations prescribed under subsection (e), each agency shall promptly provide notification to the Office of Personnel Management of vacant covered positions in the agency for which the agency seeks applications from individuals who are not employees of that agency.

“(c) LIST.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE.—The Office of Personnel Management shall establish and maintain a comprehensive list of vacant positions within each agency for which applications are currently being accepted or will soon be accepted.

“(2) CONTENTS AND AVAILABILITY.—The list established and maintained under this subsection shall—

“(A) include—

“(i) a brief description of each position, including the title, expected duration, location, and rate of pay of the position;

“(ii) the period during which applications will be accepted;

“(iii) application procedures, including who may apply, and procedures for obtaining additional information;

“(iv) the conditions under which applicants may be considered; and

“(v) any other information the Office considers appropriate; and

“(B) be made available to the public, in such form as the Office requires in regulations prescribed under subsection (e).

“(d) FEES.—

“(1) CHARGING.—The Office of Personnel Management may charge fees to agencies for services provided under this section and for related Federal employment information.

“(2) RETAINING AND USE.—The Office shall retain fees collected under this subsection to pay the costs of providing the services and information.

“(e) REGULATIONS.—The Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe regulations to carry out this section.”.

(C) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking the items relating to sections 3317 through 3330 and inserting the following:

“3317. Competitive service; certification and selection using numerical ratings.

“[3318. Repealed.]”

“3319. Competitive service; selection using category rating.

“3320. Excepted service; government of the District of Columbia; selection.

“3321. Competitive service; probationary period.

“[3322. Repealed.]”

“3323. Automatic separations; reappointment; reemployment of annuitants.

“3324. Appointments to positions classified above GS-15.

“3325. Appointments to scientific and professional positions.

“3326. Appointments of retired members of the armed forces to positions in the Department of Defense.

“3327. Civil service positions list.

“3328. Selective Service registration.

“3329. Appointments of military reserve technicians to positions in the competitive service.

“[3330. Repealed.]”.

SEC. 7. TRAINING.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act—

(1) in consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, the Office of Personnel Management shall develop and notify agencies of a training program for human resources professionals to implement the requirements of this Act; and

(2) each agency shall develop and submit to the Office of Personnel Management a plan to implement the training program.

SEC. 8. REDUCTION IN THE LENGTH OF THE HIRING PROCESS.

(a) AGENCY PLANS.—Unless the Office of Personnel Management certifies an agency already has a plan in effect, the head of each agency shall develop a plan to reduce the length of the hiring process, which shall include an analysis of the current hiring process performed in accordance with standards established by the Office of Personnel Management.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—To the extent practical, each agency shall fill identified vacancies not later than an average of 80 calendar days after the date of identification of the vacancy.

(c) REPORTS.—Each agency shall submit an annual report to Congress on the average period of time required to fill each position, and whether such positions are cancelled or reopened.

SEC. 9. MEASURES OF FEDERAL HIRING EFFECTIVENESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each agency shall measure and collect information on indicators of hiring effectiveness relating to—

(1) recruiting and hiring, including the—

(A) ability to reach and recruit highly qualified talent from diverse talent pools;

(B) use and impact of each hiring authority and flexibility to recruit most qualified applicants, including the use of student internships and scholarship programs as a talent pool for permanent hires;

(C) use and impact of special hiring authorities and flexibilities to recruit diverse candidates, including veteran, minority, and disabled candidates;

(D) age, educational level, and source of applicants;

(E) length of time between the time a position is advertised and the time a first offer of employment is made;

(F) length of time between the time a first offer of employment for a position is made and the time a new hire starts in that position;

(G) number of internal and external applicants for Federal positions;

(H) number of positions filled compared to the specific number in the annual workforce

plan of the agency, with specific reference to mission-critical occupations or areas of critical shortage deficiencies; and

(I) number of offers accepted compared to the number of offers made for permanent positions;

(2) hiring manager assessment, including—

(A) manager satisfaction with the quality of the applicants interviewed and new hires;

(B) manager satisfaction with the match between the skills of newly hired individuals and the needs of the agency;

(C) manager satisfaction with the hiring process and hiring outcomes;

(D) any mission-critical deficiency closed by new hires and the connection between mission-critical deficiencies and annual agency performance; and

(E) manager satisfaction with the length of time to fill a position;

(3) applicant satisfaction with the hiring process, including—

(A) the clarity of the announcement of the vacant position;

(B) the reasons for withdrawal of any application;

(C) the user-friendliness of the application process;

(D) communication regarding status of application; and

(E) the timeliness of hiring decision; and

(4) new hire assessment, including—

(A) new hire satisfaction with the hiring process, including—

(i) the clarity of the announcement of the vacant position;

(ii) the user-friendliness of the application process;

(iii) communication regarding status of application; and

(iv) the timeliness of hiring decision;

(B) satisfaction with the onboarding experience, including—

(i) the timeliness of onboarding after the hiring decision;

(ii) the welcoming and orientation processes; and

(iii) being provided with timely and useful new employee information and assistance;

(C) new hire attrition;

(D) investment in training and development for employees during their first year of employment; and

(E) other indicators and measures as required by the Office of Personnel Management.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each agency shall submit on an annual basis and in accordance with regulations prescribed under subsection (c) the information collected under subsection (a) to the Office of Personnel Management.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF RECRUITING AND HIRING INFORMATION.—Each year the Office of Personnel Management shall provide the information submitted under paragraph (1) in a consistent format to allow for a comparison of hiring effectiveness and experience across demographic groups and agencies to—

(A) Congress before that information is made publicly available; and

(B) the public on the website of the Office not later than 90 days after the submission of the information under paragraph (1).

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe regulations directing the methodology, timing, and reporting of the data described in subsection (a).

SEC. 10. REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under section 9(c), not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe regulations as necessary to carry out this Act.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall consult the Chief Human Capital Officers Council in the development of regulations under this section.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 276—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL INFANT MORTALITY AWARENESS MONTH OF 2011

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

S. RES. 276

Whereas “infant mortality” refers to the death of a baby before his or her first birthday;

Whereas the United States ranks 41st among industrialized countries in the rate of infant mortality;

Whereas high rates of infant mortality are especially prevalent in communities with large minority populations, high rates of unemployment and poverty, and limited access to safe housing and medical providers;

Whereas premature birth is a leading cause of infant mortality;

Whereas according to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, premature birth costs the United States more than \$26,000,000,000 annually;

Whereas infant mortality can be substantially reduced through community-based services such as outreach, home visitation, case management, health education, and interconceptional care;

Whereas support for community-based programs to reduce infant mortality can result in lower future spending on medical interventions, special education, and other social services that may be needed for infants and children who are born with a low birth weight;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services, through the Office of Minority Health, has implemented the “A Healthy Baby Begins With You” campaign;

Whereas the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration has provided national leadership on the issue of infant mortality;

Whereas public awareness and education campaigns on infant mortality are held during the month of September each year; and

Whereas September 2011 has been designated as “National Infant Mortality Awareness Month”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Infant Mortality Awareness Month 2011;

(2) supports efforts to educate people in the United States about infant mortality and the factors that contribute to infant mortality;

(3) supports efforts to reduce infant deaths, low birth weight, pre-term births, and disparities in perinatal outcomes;

(4) recognizes the critical importance of including efforts to reduce infant mortality and the factors that contribute to infant mortality as part of prevention and wellness strategies; and

(5) calls upon the people of the United States to observe National Infant Mortality Awareness Month with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 277—RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2011 AS “NATIONAL PRINCIPALS MONTH”

Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WARNER, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 277

Whereas the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Elementary School Principals have declared the month of October 2011 as “National Principals Month”;

Whereas principals are educational visionaries, instructional and assessment leaders, disciplinarians, community builders, budget analysts, facilities managers, and administrators of legal and contractual obligations;

Whereas principals work collaboratively with teachers and parents to develop and implement a clear mission, high curriculum standards, and performance goals;

Whereas principals create school environments that facilitate great teaching and learning and continuous school improvement;

Whereas the vision, actions, and dedication of principals provide the mobilizing force behind any school reform effort; and

Whereas the celebration of “National Principals Month” would honor elementary school, middle school, and high school principals, and recognize the importance of principals in ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the month of October 2011 as “National Principals Month”; and

(2) honors the contribution of principals in the elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools of our Nation by supporting the goals and ideals of “National Principals Month”.

SENATE RESOLUTION 278—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2011 AS “NATIONAL PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH”

Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Mr. KERRY, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. LEE, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. AKAKA, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. JOHANNES, and Mr. BLUNT) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 278

Whereas countless families in the United States live with prostate cancer;

Whereas 1 in 6 males in the United States will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in his lifetime;

Whereas prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed non-skin cancer and the second most common cause of cancer-related deaths among males in the United States;

Whereas in 2011, the American Cancer Society estimates that 240,890 males in the United States will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and 33,720 males will die from the disease;

Whereas 30 percent of newly diagnosed prostate cancer cases occur in males under the age of 65;

Whereas approximately every 14 seconds, a male in the United States turns 50 years old