

AMENDMENT NO. 819

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 819 intended to be proposed to S. 2226, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 820

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 820 intended to be proposed to S. 2226, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 826

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 826 intended to be proposed to S. 2226, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 828

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 828 intended to be proposed to S. 2226, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 931

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 931 intended to be proposed to S. 2226, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 933

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 933 intended to be proposed to S. 2226, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of

the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PADILLA, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2381. A bill to require the search and retention of certain records with respect to conducting criminal background checks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, today I am reintroducing legislation that would help bolster the Nation's background check system for firearms.

Under current law, incomplete background checks must be removed from the FBI's systems if they remain unresolved beyond the 88-day mark. As a result, countless firearms have been sold without completed background checks. This poses a grave danger because it allows individuals who we know are dangerous to purchase firearms.

In recent years, gun sales across America have dramatically increased. In 2022, about 17.4 million guns were sold in the United States. Unfortunately, this surge in purchases has overwhelmed our already-strained background check system.

While the vast majority of background checks are promptly completed within 3 days, the sheer volume of checks means that some checks will necessarily be delayed—and sometimes significantly delayed.

According to data compiled by NBC News, between January 2020 and November 2021, the FBI was unable to resolve 734,604 background checks within the current 88-day window. As a result of these delays, the FBI was required to wipe the incomplete checks from their systems. Since these background checks were never completed, it is impossible to know how many of these firearms were transferred to purchasers who were prohibited by law from owning a gun.

Congress must act to protect public safety by ensuring that all background checks are completed.

This bill would do exactly that. It would grant the FBI the authority to retain gun purchase records until a background check is fully completed. Put simply, this bill will let the FBI do its job.

I thank Senators BLUMENTHAL, BOOKER, MENENDEZ, MURPHY, PADILLA, and WHITEHOUSE for their support, and I urge the rest of my colleagues to support the bill as well.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 2384. A bill to provide lawful permanent resident status for certain ad-

vanced STEM degree holders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam 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. 2384

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 "Keep STEM Talent Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. VISA REQUIREMENTS.

(a) GRADUATE DEGREE VISA REQUIREMENTS.—To be approved for or maintain non-immigrant status under section 101(a)(15)(F) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(F)), a student seeking to pursue an advanced degree in a STEM field (as defined in section 201(b)(1)(F)(ii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151(b)(1)(F)(ii))) (as amended by section 3(a)) for a degree at the master's level or higher at a United States institution of higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a))) must apply for admission prior to beginning such advanced degree program.

(b) STRENGTHENED VETTING PROCESS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State shall establish procedures to ensure that aliens described in subsection (a) are admissible pursuant to section 212(a)(3)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(3)(A)). Such procedures shall ensure that such aliens seeking admission from within the United States undergo verification of academic credentials, comprehensive background checks, and interviews in a manner equivalent to that of an alien seeking admission from outside of the United States. To the greatest extent practicable, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State shall also take steps to ensure that such applications for admission are processed in a timely manner to allow the pursuit of graduate education.

(c) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State shall submit an annual report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives detailing the implementation and effectiveness of the requirement for foreign graduate students pursuing advanced degrees in STEM fields to seek admission prior to pursuing a graduate degree program. The report shall include data on visa application volumes, processing times, security outcomes, and economic impacts.

SEC. 3. LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS FOR CERTAIN ADVANCED STEM DEGREE HOLDERS.

(a) ALIENS NOT SUBJECT TO DIRECT NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—Section 201(b)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151(b)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(F)(i) Aliens who—

“(I) have earned a degree in a STEM field at the master's level or higher while physically present in the United States from a United States institution of higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a))) accredited by an accrediting entity recognized by the Department of Education;

“(II) have an offer of employment from, or are employed by, a United States employer to perform work that is directly related to

such degree at a rate of pay that is higher than the median wage level for the occupational classification in the area of employment, as determined by the Secretary of Labor; and

“(III) have an approved labor certification under section 212(a)(5)(A)(i); or

“(IV) are the spouses and children of aliens described in subclauses (I) through (III) who are accompanying or following to join such aliens.

“(ii) In this subparagraph, the term ‘STEM field’ means a field of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics described in the most recent version of the Classification of Instructional Programs of the Department of Education taxonomy under the summary group of—

“(I) computer and information sciences and support services;

“(II) engineering;

“(III) mathematics and statistics;

“(IV) biological and biomedical sciences;

“(V) physical sciences;

“(VI) agriculture sciences; or

“(VII) natural resources and conservation sciences.”.

(b) PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING IMMIGRATION STATUS.—Section 204(a)(1)(F) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1154(a)(1)(F)) is amended—

(1) by striking “203(b)(2)” and all that follows through “Attorney General”; and

(2) by inserting “203(b)(2), 203(b)(3), or 201(b)(1)(F) may file a petition with the Secretary of Homeland Security”.

(c) LABOR CERTIFICATION.—Section 212(a)(5)(D) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(5)(D)) is amended by inserting “section 201(b)(1)(F) or under” after “adjustment of status under”.

(d) DUAL INTENT FOR F NONIMMIGRANTS SEEKING ADVANCED STEM DEGREES AT UNITED STATES INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—Notwithstanding sections 101(a)(15)(F)(i) and 214(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(F)(i) and 1184(b)), an alien who is a bona fide student admitted to a program in a STEM field (as defined in subparagraph (F)(ii) of section 201(b)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151(b)(1))) for a degree at the master’s level or higher at a United States institution of higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a))) accredited by an accrediting entity recognized by the Department of Education may obtain a student visa, be admitted to the United States as a nonimmigrant student, or extend or change nonimmigrant status to pursue such degree even if such alien seeks lawful permanent resident status in the United States. Nothing in this subsection may be construed to modify or amend section 101(a)(15)(F)(i) or 214(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(F)(i) or 1184(b)), or any regulation interpreting these authorities for an alien who is not described in this subsection.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 302—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE TO SUPPORT UKRAINE’S ACCESSION INTO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 302

Whereas the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established to provide

“for [the] collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security” of its members through promoting cooperation and committing them to democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law, and the peaceful resolution of disputes;

Whereas, on August 24, 1991, Ukraine became a sovereign, independent nation and started a long process of reforms with the goal of achieving democracy, transparency, and rule of law;

Whereas, on December 5, 1994, Ukraine signed the Budapest Memorandum and surrendered its nuclear weapons, the third largest stockpile in the world at the time, in exchange for nonbinding security guarantees from the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Russian Federation;

Whereas, on April 3, 2008, heads of state and government of the member countries of NATO signed the Bucharest Summit Declaration, which stated, “NATO welcomes Ukraine’s and Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO. Both nations have made valuable contributions to Alliance operations”;

Whereas, on February 20, 2014, the Russian Federation and its proxies launched an unprovoked invasion of Crimea and annexed the peninsula, and has illegally occupied the peninsula since;

Whereas, on April 6, 2014, the Russian Federation and its proxies launched an operation in the Donetsk and Luhansk provinces of Ukraine and have illegally occupied portions of the Donbas region since;

Whereas, on February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation launched a full-scale, unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, a sovereign nation that borders Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania, all of whom are members of NATO;

Whereas, on September 30, 2022, Ukraine formally applied to join NATO, and President Volodymyr Zelensky stated, “We are taking our decisive step by signing Ukraine’s application for accelerated accession to NATO.”;

Whereas, on June 17, 2023, President Vladimir Putin confirmed that the Russian Federation had begun to deploy tactical nuclear weapons within the Republic of Belarus, further increasing the threat posed by the Russian Federation to Ukraine, surrounding NATO countries, allies, partners, and United States troops stationed in the region;

Whereas, on July 7, 2023, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg stated that, at the NATO Summit 2023, NATO leaders “will agree a multi-year program of assistance to ensure full interoperability between the Ukrainian armed forces and NATO” and “will reaffirm that Ukraine will become a member of NATO and unite on how to bring Ukraine closer to its goal”;

Whereas, on August 24, Ukraine celebrates their independence day and commemorates the date on which they left the Soviet Union to become a sovereign and democratic state;

Whereas NATO members “are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples”, which Ukraine has done since the first day of the Russian Federation’s unprovoked full-scale invasion more than 500 days ago; and

Whereas, with support from NATO members and partner nations around the world, Ukraine continues to counter the Russian Federation’s aggression; Now, therefore be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

The Senate—

(1) stands with the people of Ukraine and supports the accession of Ukraine into NATO as soon as possible;

(2) urges the President to engage with NATO leaders to develop a clear, comprehen-

sive pathway for Ukraine’s accession into NATO;

(3) views the accession of Ukraine into NATO as critical to preventing future wars, promoting peace, and ensuring the future security of Europe and the world; and

(4) supports the Government and people of Ukraine in this unprovoked war that has stretched over 500 days, as they continue to defend their sovereignty and fight to remain an independent, free, and democratic nation.

SEC. 2. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this resolution may be construed as authorizing the use of military force or the introduction of United States forces into hostilities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 303—CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS RIFLE TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2023 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIP, THE PROGRAM’S 11TH TITLE OVERALL

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 303

Whereas the University of Alaska Fairbanks rifle team (referred to in this preamble as the “Nanooks”) won the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the “NCAA”) championship where the team was awarded 12 individual and 1 team Collegiate Rifle Coaches Association (referred to in this preamble as the “CRCA”) All-American Honors;

Whereas, the Nanooks have won—

(1) eleven NCAA championships;

(2) three consecutive NCAA championships; and

(3) the second-most national championships in NCAA rifle competition history;

Whereas, at the 2023 NCAA championship, the Nanooks placed first with a score of 4729;

Whereas the Nanooks placed first in the individual smallbore category with a score of 2349;

Whereas the Nanooks placed first in the individual air rifle category with a score of 2380;

Whereas Rylan Kissell was awarded the First Team CRCA All-American Aggregate, First Team CRCA All-American Air Rifle, First Team CRCA All-American Smallbore, and CRCA Most Valuable Shooter;

Whereas Sára Karasová was awarded the Second Team CRCA All-American Aggregate, First Team CRCA All-American Smallbore, and Second Team CRCA All-American Air Rifle;

Whereas Gavin Barnick was awarded the Second Team CRCA All-American Aggregate, First Team CRCA All-American Smallbore, and Honorable Mention CRCA All-American Air Rifle;

Whereas Rachael Charles was awarded the Honorable Mention CRCA All-American Aggregate and Second Team CRCA All-American Smallbore;

Whereas the full roster, consisting of Gavin Barnick, Tobias Bernhoft-Osa, Rachael Charles, Peter Fiori, Marina Gonzalez Mazo, Sára Karasová, Rylan Kissell, and Kellen McAferty, received the CRCA Scholastic Academic All-American honors this season; and

Whereas the Nanooks Head Coach, Will Anti, led the team to 11 wins and 0 losses during the 2022 to 2023 season, which included winning the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association championship: Now, therefore, be it