added as cosponsors of S. Res. 833, a resolution countering disinformation, propaganda, and misinformation in Latin America and the Caribbean, and calling for multi-stakeholder efforts to address the significant detrimental effects that the rise in disinformation, propaganda, and misinformation in regional information environments has on democratic governance, human rights, and United States national interests.

AMENDMENT NO. 2853

At the request of Mr. HICKENLOOPER, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2853 intended to be proposed to S. 4638, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 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 Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Ms. BUTLER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 5165. A bill to prohibit the intimidation of election officials and election workers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise to introduce the Freedom from Intimidation in Elections Act of 2024.

This legislation would amend section 11(b) of the Voting Rights Act to establish a rebuttable presumption that carrying a visible firearm around election-related activities, such as voting or counting ballots, constitutes intimidation within the meaning of the VRA.

This bill empowers voters and election workers to seek an emergency civil injunction against individuals or groups engaged in such intimidating conduct.

Importantly, the bill provides an exemption for appropriate law enforcement officials and allows any group or individual facing suit to present evidence that they did not, in fact, intimidate any voters or election workers.

Given the increasing political polarization this country faces and the Supreme Court's everchanging interpretation of the Second Amendment, the risk of violence at polling places and election offices has never been higher. This bill is essential to ensure that eligible individuals can continue to exercise their right to vote without fear of retribution or harm.

It is imperative to protect our voters and dedicated election workers from threats of political violence by updating the Voting Rights Act's anti-intimidation provisions to address the specific threat posed by firearms around election activities.

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

S. 5172. A bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to ensure that businesses and organizations that work with vulnerable populations are able to request background checks for their contractors who work with those populations, as well as for individuals that the businesses or organizations license or certify to provide care for those populations; 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. 5172

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

SECTION 1. DEFINING "COVERED INDIVIDUAL" FOR PURPOSES OF BACKGROUND CHECKS UNDER THE NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION ACT OF 1993.

Section 5(9)(B) of the National Child Protection Act of 1993 (34 U.S.C. 40104(9)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i)—

(A) by inserting '', contracts with,'' after ''is employed by'';

(B) by inserting '', contract with,'' after ''be employed by''; and

(C) by striking ''or'' at the end;

(2) by redesignating clause (ii) as clause (iii);

(3) by inserting after clause (i) the following:

''(ii) is employed by or volunteers with, or seeks to be employed by or volunteer with, an entity that is under contract with a qualified entity;'';

(4) in clause (iii), as so redesignated, by adding ''or'' at the end; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) is licensed or certified, or seeks to be licensed or certified, by a qualified entity;''.

By Mr. PADILLA:

S. 5205. A bill to modify the boundaries of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise to introduce the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge Expansion Act. This legislation would expand the boundary of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge by approximately 5,658 acres to conserve additional land in Solano, Marin, and Sonoma Counties of California.

The San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge consists of more than 19,000 acres located along the northern edge of San Pablo Bay in Northern California. It was established in 1974 to support wetland habitat; endangered species, like the salt marsh harvest mouse and the Ridgeway's Rail; and migratory birds, including the largest wintering population of Canvasbacks on the west coast.

In addition to providing habitat and wildlife conservation, the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge offers numerous recreation opportunities, including wildlife viewing, wildlife photography, hiking, boating, fishing, and hunting. Regulation of these recreation activities allows for public enjoyment of the refuge while still protecting the wildlife and their habitats.

The bill would expand the San Pablo Bay National Refuge by 5,658 acres, which is more than 28 percent of its current size. The bill would also authorize the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to acquire lands within the modified boundary from willing sellers or donors and allow other Federal Agencies to transfer federally owned land within the modified boundary to the Service without administrative hurdles. Finally, the bill would encourage the Service to allocate Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars to acquire any private inholdings within modified National Wildlife Refuge boundary.

The Fish and Wildlife Service recently reported that 221 million acres of wetlands were destroyed between 2009 and 2019, representing a 50-percent increase in the rate of loss from the previous decade. The loss of wetlands across the country has reduced the amount of critical habitat for wildlife, endangered species, and migratory birds. Given these trends and its prime location within the Pacific Flyway, expanding the boundaries of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge offers a unique opportunity to protect both critical wetland habitat and priority public uses on Federal lands.

Importantly, expanding the refuge would also contribute to the State of California's and the Biden-Harris Administration's goals to conserve 30 percent of our public lands and waters by 2030.

I would like to thank my colleagues Representatives JOHN GARAMENDI, MIKE THOMPSON, and JARED HUFFMAN for championing this bill in the House.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge Expansion Act as quickly as possible.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 5209. A bill to require the Attorney General to make publicly available a list of federally licensed firearms dealers with a high number of short time-to-crime firearm traces, and to prohibit Federal departments and agencies from contracting with such dealers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise to introduce the Clean Hands Firearm Procurement Act.

This legislation addresses a critical need to ensure that Federal resources do not inadvertently support gun dealers whose business practices may contribute to the proliferation of firearms used in criminal activities.

The Clean Hands Firearm Procurement Act would withhold Federal contracts from Federal firearm, licensees, FFLs, who have been listed in the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' AFT Demand 2 Program twice in the preceding 3 calendar years.

The Demand 2 Program targets gun dealers who have sold 25 or more firearms within a year that are subsequently traced to crimes within 3 years of their sale.

Under this act, dealers identified under the Demand 2 Program will be prohibited from entering into Federal contracts for a period of 3 years following their last appearance on the list. However, the Attorney General would have the discretion to waive this prohibition for the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security if it is deemed necessary to protect national security.

Over the past two decades, the ATF's Demand 2 Program has been instrumental in identifying gun dealers whose sales practices may be contributing to the diversion of firearms to criminal activities. While the vast majority of an FFLs operate responsibly, a small fraction—about 2 percent—of these dealers have been shown to be a significant source of crime guns.

Between 2021 and 2023, only approximately 1,500 of the Nation's 75,000-plus FFLs were subject to the Demand 2 Program. This small group of dealers has a disproportionate impact on gun violence in our communities. It is deeply troubling that some of these dealers have continued to receive lucrative Federal contracts despite their track record.

The Clean Hands Firearm Procurement Act aims to incentivize better business practices among gun dealers by ensuring that those with a history of contributing to gun violence through irresponsible sales are not rewarded with Federal contracts. This bill is a critical step towards reducing gun violence and ensuring that Federal procurement practices do not inadvertently support the diversion of firearms to criminal activities.

Americans deserve to feel safe in their communities, and our government has a responsibility to ensure that its resources are used to promote public safety, not undermine it. By passing this legislation, we can take meaningful action to address the gun violence epidemic that continues to plague our Nation.

Public safety is paramount, and this bill represents an important measure to strengthen our efforts in combating the illegal use of firearms. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the Clean Hands Firearm Procurement Act as swiftly as possible.

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

S. 5216. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of constructing a project to supply municipal, rural, and industrial water from the Missouri River to the Western Dakota Regional Water System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. THUNE. 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. 5216

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 ''Western South Dakota Water Supply Project Feasibility Study Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) RECLAMATION FEASIBILITY STANDARDS.—The term ''reclamation feasibility standards'' means the eligibility criteria and feasibility study requirements described in section 106 of the Reclamation Rural Water Supply Act of 2006 (43 U.S.C. 2405).

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) WESTERN DAKOTA REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM.—The term ''Western Dakota Regional Water System'' means the Western Dakota Regional Water System, Inc., a nonprofit corporation established and operated substantially in accordance with the reclamation feasibility standards to serve as a non-Federal project entity for purposes of the cooperative agreement entered into under section 3(b).

SEC. 3. WESTERN SOUTH DAKOTA WATER SUPPLY PROJECT FEASIBILITY STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the West Dakota Water Development District, through a cooperative agreement, may undertake a study to determine the feasibility of constructing a project to supply municipal, rural, and industrial water from the Missouri River to the Western Dakota Regional Water System.

(2) REQUIREMENT.—The study under paragraph (1) shall comply with the reclamation feasibility standards.

(b) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—If the Secretary determines that the study under subsection (a) does not comply with the reclamation feasibility standards, the Secretary may enter into a cooperative agreement with the Western Dakota Regional Water System to complete additional work to ensure that the study under that subsection complies with the reclamation feasibility standards.

(c) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the total costs of carrying out the feasibility study under this section shall not exceed 50 percent.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section $10,000,000.

(e) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority provided by this section expires on the date that is 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 5272. A bill to amend chapter 423 of title 49, United States Code, to provide protections with respect to frequent flyer programs and co-branded credit cards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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. 5272

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 ''Protect Your Points Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. PROTECTIONS RELATING TO FREQUENT FLYER PROGRAMS AND CO-BRANDED CREDIT CARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 423 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 42309. PROTECTIONS RELATING TO FREQUENT FLYER PROGRAMS AND CO-BRANDED CREDIT CARDS.

''(a) PROTECTIONS RELATED TO POINTS, MILES, AND OTHER ACCRUED VALUE.—

''(1) VALUE DISCLOSURE.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, each covered air carrier shall—

''(A) prominently display on each page of the website of the air carrier information regarding the financial value of one point, mile, or other accrued value promised or offered in connection with a frequent flyer program; and

''(B) update, in real time, any change to such information.

''(2) EXPIRATION OF POINTS.—A covered air carrier shall not place an expiration date on any points, miles, or other accrued value promised or offered in connection with a frequent flyer program.

''(3) TRANSFER OF POINTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A covered air carrier shall—

''(i) allow a consumer participating in a frequent flyer program to transfer any amount of points, miles, or other accrued value of the consumer to another participant (chosen by the consumer) of the same frequent flyer program; and

''(ii) guarantee that, with respect to any such transfer, the points, miles, or other accrued value remain equal in value once transferred.

''(B) LIMITATIONS.—A covered air carrier shall not—

''(i) limit the number of points, miles, or other accrued value that a consumer may transfer to another participant of the frequent flyer program; or

''(ii) impose a fee or other penalty on the consumer in connection with such transfer.

''(4) DISPLAY OF AIRFARE VALUE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, each covered air carrier shall display on any travel booking page of the website of the air carrier the cost of airfare or other add-on services both in dollar value and in the value of points, miles, or other accrued value promised or offered in connection with a frequent flyer program, in a manner that—

''(A) displays both values concurrently; and

''(B) does not require a consumer to alternate between such values to display both costs.

''(5) AIRFARE AND ADD-ON SERVICES TRANSACTIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, each covered air carrier shall offer to consumers the ability to purchase airfare or other add-on services in any combination of dollars and points, miles, or other accrued value promised or offered in connection with a frequent flyer program.

''(b) CONSUMER NOTICE OF CHANGES TO TERMS OF SERVICE.—

''(1) CHANGES TO TERMS OF SERVICES.—With respect to the terms of service, contract of carriage, or other customer agreement of any frequent flyer program or airline co-branded credit card of a covered air carrier, the covered air carrier shall not include any provision that reserves the right of the covered air carrier to make changes to the terms of service, contract of carriage, or other customer agreement without providing to the consumer at least 1 year of notice of any such change.

''(2) NOTICE TO CONSUMERS.—A covered air carrier shall not take any action that would allow the covered air carrier to devalue a consumer's accrued points, miles, or other accrued value promised or offered in connection with a frequent flyer program, including any action to decrease the dollar value,

eliminate, reduce, suspend, forfeit, invalidate, impose new limits on the access, use, redemption, or validity, or impose new requirements or expense for the redemption or use of any such points, miles, or other accrued value unless the covered air carrier has provided to consumers not fewer than 1 year of notice of any such action.

''(3) COORDINATION WITH CFPB.—In carrying out paragraphs (1) and (2), the Secretary shall coordinate with the Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, as necessary.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ADD-ON SERVICES.—The term 'add-on services' means any service that a consumer may add to a flight booking for an additional cost, or may purchase as an in-flight service, including seating options, baggage, beverages, food, early boarding, lounge access, internet or wifi access, or any other service determined appropriate by the Secretary.

''(2) CO-BRANDED CREDIT CARD.—The term 'co-branded credit card' means a credit card jointly offered by a covered air carrier in partnership with a credit card issuer, with an emphasis on rewarding brand loyalty.

''(3) COVERED AIR CARRIER.—The term 'covered air carrier' means an air carrier conducting passenger operations under part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, that offers a frequent flyer program.

''(4) FREQUENT FLYER PROGRAM.—The term 'frequent flyer program' means a program in which a covered air carrier promises or offers points, miles, or other accrued value for tickets purchased from the covered air carrier.

''(5) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Transportation.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 423 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 42308 the following:

''42309. Protections relating to frequent flyer programs and co-branded credit cards.''.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 5289. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to carry out activities to provide for white oak restoration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. 5289

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 ''White Oak Resilience Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF LAND-GRANT COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.

In this Act, the term ''land-grant college or university'' means—

(1) an 1862 Institution (as defined in section 2 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601));

(2) an 1890 Institution (as defined in that section); and

(3) a 1994 Institution (as defined in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103–382)).

SEC. 3. WHITE OAK RESTORATION INITIATIVE COALITION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition (referred to in this section as the ''Coalition'')—

(1) as a voluntary collaborative group of public, State, private, and nongovernmental organizations to carry out the duties described in subsection (b); and

(2) in accordance with the charter entitled ''White Oak Initiative Coalition Charter'' adopted by the White Oak Initiative Board of Directors on March 21, 2023 (or a successor charter).

(b) DUTIES.—In addition to the duties specified in the charter described in subsection (a)(2), the duties of the Coalition are—

(1) to coordinate public, State, local, private, and nongovernmental restoration of white oak in the United States;

(2) to make program and policy recommendations with respect to—

(A) changes necessary to address Federal and State policies that impede activities to improve the health, resiliency, and natural regeneration of white oak;

(B) adopting or modifying Federal and State policies to increase the pace and scale of white oak regeneration and resiliency of white oak;

(C) options to enhance communication, coordination, and collaboration between forest land owners, particularly for cross-boundary projects, to improve the health, resiliency, and natural regeneration of white oak;

(D) research gaps that should be addressed to improve the best available science on white oak;

(E) outreach to forest landowners with white oak or white oak regeneration potential; and

(F) options and policies necessary to improve the quality and quantity of white oak in tree nurseries; and

(3) to submit the report under subsection (c).

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Coalition shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives a report describing the activities of the Coalition during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, including the recommendations described in subsection (b)(2).

(d) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, TECHNICAL SERVICES, AND STAFF SUPPORT.—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall make such personnel available to the Coalition for administrative support, technical services, and development and dissemination of educational materials as the Secretaries determine to be necessary to carry out this section.

(e) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—Chapter 10 of title 5, United States Code, shall not apply to the Coalition.

(f) PRIVATE FUNDING OF WHITE OAK RESTORATION PROJECTS.—The Secretary of Agriculture may make available funds to the Coalition to carry out this section from funds in the accounts established pursuant to section 1241(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841(f)).

SEC. 4. FOREST SERVICE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall establish and carry out 5 pilot projects in national forests to restore white oak in those national forests through white oak restoration and natural regeneration practices.

(b) NATIONAL FORESTS RESERVED OR WITHDRAWN FROM THE PUBLIC DOMAIN.—At least 3 pilot projects required under subsection (a) shall be carried out in national forests reserved or withdrawn from the public domain.

(c) AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary of Agriculture may enter into cooperative agreements to carry out the pilot projects required under subsection (a).

SEC. 5. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR WHITE OAK ASSESSMENT AND PILOT PROJECTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED LAND.—The term ''covered land'' means land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary, including a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System and abandoned mine land.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) ASSESSMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall carry out an assessment of covered land to evaluate—

(A) whether white oak is present on the covered land; and

(B) the potential to restore white oak forests on the covered land.

(2) USE OF INFORMATION.—In carrying out the assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary may use information from sources other than the Department of the Interior, including information from—

(A) the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition established by section 3(a); and

(B) the Chief of the Forest Service.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress, and make publicly available on the website of the Department of the Interior, a report describing the results of the assessment carried out under paragraph (1).

(c) PILOT PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date on which the Secretary submits the report required under subsection (b)(3), the Secretary shall establish and carry out 5 pilot projects on various areas of covered land, the purpose of which is to restore and naturally regenerate white oak.

(2) AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements to carry out the pilot projects required under paragraph (1).

SEC. 6. WHITE OAK REGENERATION AND UPLAND OAK HABITAT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this section as the ''Secretary'') shall establish a nonregulatory program to be known as the ''White Oak and Upland Oak Habitat Regeneration Program'' (referred to in this section as the ''Program'').

(b) DUTIES.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretary shall—

(1) draw upon the best available science and management plans for species of white oak to identify, prioritize, and implement restoration and conservation activities that will improve the growth of white oak within the United States;

(2) collaborate and coordinate with the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition to prioritize white oak restoration initiatives;

(3) adopt a white oak restoration strategy that—

(A) supports the implementation of a shared set of science-based restoration and conservation activities developed in accordance with paragraph (1);

(B) targets cost-effective projects with measurable results; and

(C) maximizes restoration outcomes with no net gain of Federal full-time equivalent employees; and

(4) establish the voluntary grant and technical assistance program in accordance with subsection (e).

(c) COORDINATION.—In establishing the Program, the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall consult with—

(1) the heads of Federal agencies, including—

(A) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

(B) the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and

(2) the Governor of each State in which restoration efforts will be carried out pursuant to the Program.

(d) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Program include—

(1) coordinating restoration and conservation activities among Federal, State, local, and Tribal entities and conservation partners to address white oak restoration priorities;

(2) improving and regenerating white oak and upland oak forests and the wildlife habitat such forests provide;

(3) carrying out coordinated restoration and conservation activities that lead to the increased growth of species of white oak in native white oak regions on Federal, State, Tribal, and private land;

(4) facilitating strategic planning to maximize the resilience of white oak systems and habitats under changing climate conditions;

(5) engaging the public through outreach, education, and citizen involvement to increase capacity and support for coordinated restoration and conservation activities for species of white oak; and

(6) increasing scientific capacity to support the planning, monitoring, and research activities necessary to carry out such coordinated restoration and conservation activities.

(e) GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To the extent that funds are available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall establish a voluntary grant and technical assistance program (referred to in this subsection as the ''grant program'') to achieve the purposes of the Program described in subsection (d).

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (referred to in this subsection as the ''Foundation'') to manage and administer the grant program.

(B) FUNDING.—After the Secretary enters into a cooperative agreement with the Foundation under subparagraph (A), the Foundation shall—

(i) for each fiscal year, receive amounts to carry out this subsection in an advance payment of the entire amount on October 1, or as soon as practicable thereafter, of that fiscal year;

(ii) invest and reinvest such amounts for the benefit of the grant program; and

(iii) otherwise administer the grant program to support partnerships between the public and private sectors in accordance with this section.

(3) APPLICATION OF NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION ESTABLISHMENT ACT.—Amounts received by the Foundation to carry out the grant program shall be subject to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.), excluding section 10(a) of that Act (16 U.S.C. 3709(a)).

SEC. 7. WHITE OAK TREE NURSERY SHORTAGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall develop and implement a national strategy to increase the capacity of Federal, State, Tribal, and private tree nurseries to address the nationwide shortage of white oak tree seedlings.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be based on the best available science and data, as established by land-grant colleges and universities that have demonstrated—

(A) scientific expertise relating to white oak;

(B) the ability to rapidly transfer technologies to the stave industry;

(C) geographic proximity to concentrated areas of white oak; and

(D) support for regional economic development; and

(2) identify and address—

(A) regional shortages of bareroot and container white oak tree seedlings;

(B) regional white oak reforestation opportunities and the seedling supply necessary to fulfill those opportunities;

(C) opportunities to enhance white oak seedling diversity and close gaps in seed inventories; and

(D) barriers to expanding, enhancing, or creating new infrastructure to increase nursery capacity for white oak tree seedlings.

SEC. 8. WHITE OAK RESEARCH.

(a) RESEARCH.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with a land-grant college or university to conduct research on—

(1) white oak genes with resistance and stress tolerance;

(2) white oak trees that exhibit vigor for the purpose of increasing survival and growth;

(3) establishing a diverse white oak seed bank capable of responding to stressors;

(4) providing a sustainable supply of white oak seedlings and genetic resources;

(5) reforestation of white oak through natural and artificial regeneration; and

(6) the best methods for white oak reforestation on abandoned mine land sites.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the research under subsection (a), the land-grant college or university may consult with such States, nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, and other scientific bodies as the land-grant college or university determines to be appropriate.

SEC. 9. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE.

(a) PARTNERSHIPS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, shall enter into a partnership with an eligible entity described in paragraph (2) to conduct research on improving white oak species resiliency, health, and preservation, including research on—

(A) population-scale sequencing;

(B) stress response traits;

(C) seedling physiology and performance; and

(D) white oak product development.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—An eligible entity referred to in paragraph (1) is a land-grant college or university that has demonstrated—

(A) scientific expertise relating to white oak;

(B) the ability to rapidly transfer technologies to the stave industry;

(C) geographic proximity to concentrated areas of white oak; and

(D) support for regional economic development.

(b) PRIORITIES.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, shall prioritize research relating to the resistance of white oak to disease, pest, heat, and drought in cultivated, new, and old-growth white oak timber stands.

SEC. 10. NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE INITIATIVE.

The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, shall establish an initiative on white oak—

(1) to re-establish white oak forests where appropriate;

(2) to improve the management of existing white oak forests to foster natural regeneration of white oak; and

(3) to provide technical assistance to private landowners to re-establish, improve management of, and naturally regenerate white oak.

SEC. 11. AUTHORITIES.

To the maximum extent practicable, to carry out activities under this Act and the amendments made by this Act, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall use the authorities provided under this Act and those amendments, in combination with authorities under other provisions of law, including—

(1) good neighbor agreements under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a); and

(2) stewardship contracting projects under section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c).

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 856—RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2024 AS FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH AND CELEBRATING THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF FILIPINO AMERICANS AND THEIR IMMENSE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED STATES

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BUTLER, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. HELMY, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Ms. DUCKWORTH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 856

Whereas the earliest documented Filipino presence in the continental United States was October 18, 1587, when the first ''Luzones Indios'' arrived in Morro Bay, California, on board the Nuestra Señora de Esperanza, a Manila-built galleon ship;

Whereas the Filipino American National Historical Society recognizes 1763 as the year in which the first permanent Filipino settlement in the United States was established in St. Malo, Louisiana;

Whereas the recognition of the first permanent Filipino settlement in the United States adds a new perspective to the history of the United States by bringing attention to the economic, cultural, social, and other notable contributions made by Filipino Americans to the development of the United States;

Whereas the Filipino American community is the third largest Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander group in the United States, with a population of approximately 4,500,000;

Whereas, from 2000 to 2019, the Filipino American community grew 78 percent, and Filipinos are the largest Asian community in Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada,