



Legislative Bulletin.....April 1, 2008

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Summary of the Bills Under Consideration Today:

Total Number of New Government Programs: 0

Total Cost of Discretionary Authorizations: \$8 million in FY 2009 and \$40 million over the FY 2009 through FY 2013 period.

Effect on Revenue: \$0

Total Change in Mandatory Spending: \$0

Total New State & Local Government Mandates: \$0

Total New Private Sector Mandates: 0

Number of Bills Without Committee Reports: 1

Number of Reported Bills that Don't Cite Specific Clauses of Constitutional Authority: 1

H.Res. 185—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the creation of refugee populations in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf region as a result of human rights violations (*Nadler, D-NY*)

Order of Business: H.Res. 185 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res. 185 would express the sense of the House that:

- “For any comprehensive Middle East peace agreement to be credible and enduring, the agreement must address and resolve all outstanding issues relating to the legitimate rights of all refugees in the Middle East, including Jews, Christians, and other populations displaced from countries in the region; and
- “The President should instruct the United States Representative to the United Nations and all United States representatives in bilateral and multilateral fora to:
 - “Use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to ensure that any resolutions relating to the issue of Middle East refugees, and which include a reference to the required resolution of the Palestinian refugee issue, must also include a similarly explicit reference to the resolution of the issue of Jewish, Christian, and other refugees from Arab countries; and
 - “Make clear that the United States Government supports the position that, as an integral part of any comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace, the issue of refugees from the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf must be resolved in a manner

that includes recognition of the legitimate rights of and losses incurred by all refugees displaced from Arab countries including Jews, Christians, and other minority groups.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “Armed conflicts in the Middle East have created refugee populations numbering in the hundreds of thousands and comprised of peoples from many ethnic, religious, and national backgrounds;
- “Jews and other ethnic groups have lived mostly as minorities in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf region for more than 2,500 years, more than 1,000 years before the advent of Islam;
- “The United States has long voiced its concern about the mistreatment of minorities and the violation of human rights in the Middle East and elsewhere;
- “Approximately 850,000 Jews have been displaced from Arab countries since the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948;
- “An international campaign is proceeding in some 40 countries to record the history and legacy of Jewish refugees from Arab countries;
- “No just, comprehensive Middle East peace can be reached without addressing the uprooting of centuries-old Jewish communities in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf; and
- “It would be inappropriate and unjust for the United States to recognize rights for Palestinian refugees without recognizing equal rights for former Jewish, Christian, and other refugees from Arab countries.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 185 was introduced on February 16, 2008, and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. On February 27, 2008, a committee mark-up was held and the bill was reported by unanimous consent.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution does not authorize expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

RSC Staff Contact: Andy Koenig; andy.koenig@mail.house.gov; 202-226-9717.

H.Res. 997—Expressing the strong support of the House of Representatives for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to enter into a Membership Action Plan with Georgia and Ukraine (*Wexler, D-FL*)

Order of Business: H.Res. 997 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res. 997 would express the sense that:

- The House of Representatives:
 - “Reaffirms its previous expressions of support for continued enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to include qualified candidates; and
 - “Supports the commitment to further enlargement of NATO to include democratic governments that are able and willing to meet the responsibilities of membership;
- “The expansion of NATO contributes to NATO’s continued effectiveness and relevance;
- “Georgia and Ukraine are strong allies that have made important progress in the areas of defense, democratic, and human rights reform;
- “A stronger, deeper relationship among the Government of Georgia, the Government of Ukraine, and NATO will be mutually beneficial to those countries and to NATO member states; and
- “The United States should take the lead in supporting the awarding of a Membership Action Plan to Georgia and Ukraine as soon as possible.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “The sustained commitment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to mutual defense has made possible the democratic transformation of Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia;
- “Lasting stability and security in Europe and Eurasia require the military, economic, and political integration of emerging democracies into existing European structures;
- “In January 2008, Ukraine forwarded to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer a letter, signed by President Victor Yushchenko, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and Verkhovna Rada Speaker Arseny Yatsenyuk, requesting that NATO integrate Ukraine into the Membership Action Plan;
- “In January 2008, Georgia held a referendum on NATO and 76.22 percent of the votes supported membership;
- “In February 2008, Georgia forwarded a letter signed by President Mikhail Saakashvili to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer requesting that NATO integrate Georgia into the Membership Action Plan;
- “Participation in a Membership Action Plan does not guarantee future membership in the NATO Alliance; and
- “NATO membership requires significant national and international commitments and sacrifices and is not possible without the support of the populations of the NATO member states.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 997 was introduced on February 25, 2008, and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which took no official action.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution does not authorize expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

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H.Con.Res. 154—Expressing the sense of Congress that the fatal radiation poisoning of Russian dissident and writer Alexander Litvinenko raises significant concerns about the potential involvement of elements of the Russian Government in Mr. Litvinenko’s death and about the security and proliferation of radioactive materials (Ros-Lehtinen, R-FL)

Order of Business: H.Con.Res. 154 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Con.Res. 154 would express the sense of Congress that:

- “The fatal radiation poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko raises significant concerns about the potential involvement of elements of the Russian Government in Mr. Litvinenko’s death, and about the security and proliferation of radioactive materials;
- “The use of such radioactive materials in such cases demonstrates a threat to the safety and security of the people of the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States, and other countries; and
- “The President of the United States and the Secretary of State should urge Russian President Vladimir Putin and other officials of the Russian Government to cooperate fully with the British Government in its investigation into Mr. Litvinenko’s death and to ensure the security of the production, storage, distribution, and export of polonium-210 as a material that may become dangerous to large numbers of people if utilized by terrorists.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “Russian dissident and writer Alexander Litvinenko, a citizen and resident of Great Britain, suddenly fell ill on November 1, 2006, and died three weeks later in a London hospital;
- “British health officials concluded, following an autopsy, that Mr. Litvinenko died of radiation poisoning caused by ingestion of the radioactive element polonium-210, and British law enforcement officials have announced that they are treating Mr. Litvinenko’s death as a murder;
- “According to the Health Physics Society, just one millionth of a gram of polonium-210 can be fatal, an amount invisible to the naked eye;
- “Mr. Litvinenko, after arriving in Britain, repeatedly accused the Federal Security Service and many of its officers, including now-President Putin, of involvement in organized crime, assassinations, and other illegal activity;
- “On November 1, 2006, before falling ill, Mr. Litvinenko reportedly met with three citizens of Russia, including former Federal Security Service agent Andrei Lugovoi;

- “The manner in which the polonium-210 was obtained, transported, and used must be fully investigated and revealed in order to reveal any defects or inadequacies in the present safeguard regime for that substance administered by the Russian Government and in order to prevent the unlawful, criminal, or terrorist acquisition or use of polonium-210 in the future;
- “On May 22, 2007, British authorities stated that they will seek to prosecute a Russian citizen, Andrei Lugovoi, for the murder of Mr. Litvinenko; and
- “The British investigation into Mr. Litvinenko’s murder continues.”

Committee Action: H.Con.Res. 154 was introduced on May 22, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. On February 27, 2008, a committee mark-up was held and the bill was reported by unanimous consent.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution does not authorize expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

RSC Staff Contact: Andy Koenig; andy.koenig@mail.house.gov; 202-226-9717.

H.Res. 865—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the March 2007 report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development makes an important contribution to the understanding of the high levels of crime and violence in the Caribbean, and that the United States should work with Caribbean countries to address crime and violence in the region (*Clarke, D-NY*)

Order of Business: H.Res. 865 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res. 865 would express the sense that the House:

- “Welcomes the recommendations contained in the March 2007 UNODC and World Bank report, ‘Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean’;
- “Urges the United States Government to consider fully and carefully the recommendations in the UNODC and World Bank Report and to take the recommendations into account when developing United States policy toward the region;
- “Urges the governments of United States and other drug-consuming countries to increase counter-narcotics assistance to the Caribbean region;

- “Urges the United States Government to increase coordination on policy development and implementation with Caribbean governments to help combat crime and violence in the region;
- “Urges the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security to work with Caribbean governments to mitigate the negative effects of United States deportation policy; and
- “Urges governments of Caribbean countries to consider fully and carefully the recommendations in the UNODC and World Bank Report, and to take the recommendations into account, especially regarding improvements in their criminal justice systems.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “The Caribbean region has the highest murder and assault rates in the world, with murder rates at 4 times the level of the United States;
- “Trinidad and Tobago doubled its kidnaping rate between 1999 and 2005;
- “Crime cost the Jamaican economy \$12,400,000,000 in Jamaican dollars, 3.7 percent of its gross domestic product, in 2001;
- “Reducing the region-wide homicide rate by 1/3 could over double the rate of economic growth per capita;
- “Deaths and injuries from youth violence constitute a major threat to public health and social and economic progress across the Caribbean. Youth are disproportionately represented in the ranks of both victims and perpetrators of crime and violence;
- “Several Caribbean countries are increasingly investing in crime prevention--using approaches such as integrated citizen security programs, crime prevention through environmental design, and a public health approach that focuses on risk factors for violent behaviors; and
- “Many of the issues facing the Caribbean transcend national boundaries and require a coordinated regional and international response. Demand for drugs emanates from Europe and the United States; deportees are sent back to the region from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada; and many weapons that are trafficked are brought from the United States.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 865 was introduced on December 11, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. On February 27, 2008, a committee mark-up was held and the bill was reported by unanimous consent.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution does not authorize expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

RSC Staff Contact: Andy Koenig; andy.koenig@mail.house.gov; 202-226-9717.

H.R. 2040—Civil Rights Act of 1964 Commemorative Coin Act (*Lewis, D-GA*)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 2040 would require the Secretary of Treasury to design and mint no more than 350,000 \$1 coins to commemorate the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The coins would contain 90% silver and 10% copper and have a diameter of 1.5 inches.

H.R. 2040 would require that the design on the coin be emblematic of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its contribution to civil rights in America. Each coin would have to include inscriptions bearing the value of the coin, the year 2014, and the words “Liberty,” “In God We Trust,” “United States of America,” and “E Pluribus Unum.” The final design for the coin would be selected by the Secretary, with consultation from the Commission of Fine Arts, and reviewed by the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee.

Coins issued under this bill would be issued beginning January 1, 2014, and minting shall cease on December 31, 2014. H.R. 2040 would require that coins be sold at a surcharge of \$10 per coin and that all surcharges received from the sale of the coins would go to the United Negro College Fund to provide scholarships for minority students.

Additional Background: According to findings listed in the bill, the mass civil rights movement sparked by the actions of Rosa Parks and led by Dr. Martin Luther King, eventually lead to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The bill states that the legislation “expanded civil rights protections, outlawing racial discrimination and segregation in public places and places of public accommodation, in federally funded programs, and employment and encouraging desegregation in public schools.” In addition, the bill notes that the United Negro College Fund has provided scholarships and operating funds that have helped more than 300,000 young African Americans earn college degrees. 2014 will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the passage on the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Committee Action: H.R. 2040 was introduced on May 25, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Financial Services. On June 7, 2007, the bill was referred to the Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy, Trade, and Technology, which took no official action.

Cost to Taxpayers: A CBO score for H.R. 2040 was not available at press time.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits? A Committee Report citing compliance with rules regarding earmarks, limited

tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits was not available. Such a report is not required because the bill is being considered under a suspension of the rules.

Constitutional Authority: A Committee Report citing constitutional authority was not available.

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H.Con.Res. 310—Expressing support for a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman (*Cummings, D-MD*)

Order of Business: H.Con.Res. 310 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Con.Res. 310 would express the sense that Congress:

- “Supports the designation of a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman; and
- “Encourages the people of the United States to support and participate in appropriate ceremonies, programs, and other activities to commemorate a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “Harriet Ross Tubman was born into slavery in Bucktown, Maryland, in or around 1820;
- “In 1849 she escaped to Philadelphia and became a ‘conductor’ on the Underground Railroad;
- “She was commonly referred to as ‘Moses’ due to her courage and sacrifice in leading many enslaved persons out of bondage into freedom, endeavoring despite great hardship and danger of being re-enslaved;
- “Harriet Ross Tubman became an eloquent and effective speaker on behalf of the movement to abolish slavery;
- “In 1944 the United States Maritime Commission launched the SS Harriet Tubman (Hull Number 3032), the first Liberty ship ever named for an African-American woman;
- “In 1978, Harriet Ross Tubman was the first honoree in the United States Postal Service Black Heritage Stamp Series;
- “The Episcopal Church has designated Harriet Ross Tubman a saint in its Book of Common Prayer;
- “Harriet Ross Tubman, whose courageous and dedicated pursuit of the promise of American ideals and common principles of humanity continues to serve and inspire all people who cherish freedom, died at her home in Auburn, New York, on March 10, 1913;
- “March 10, 1990, was designated as Harriet Ross Tubman Day and States such as Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, New York, and Texas host annual celebrations that honor the life of Harriet Tubman; and
- “We support honoring the contributions of Harriet Ross Tubman annually on March 10.”

Committee Action: H.Con.Res. 310 was introduced on March 5, 2008, and referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which held a mark-up and reported the bill on March 13, 2008, by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution does not authorize expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

RSC Staff Contact: Andy Koenig; andy.koenig@mail.house.gov; 202-226-9717.

H.Res. 1005—Supporting the goals and ideals of Borderline Personality Awareness Month (Davis, R-VA)

Order of Business: H.Res. 1005 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res. 1005 would express the sense that the House “supports the goals and ideals of Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “Borderline personality disorder (BPD) affects the regulation of emotion and afflicts approximately 2 percent of the general population;
- “BPD is a leading cause of suicide, as an estimated 10 percent of individuals with this disorder take their own lives;
- “BPD usually manifests itself in adolescence and early adulthood;
- “Symptoms of BPD include self-injury; rage; substance abuse; destructive impulsiveness; a pattern of unstable emotions, self-image, and relationships; and may result in suicide;
- “BPD is inheritable and is exacerbated by environmental factors;
- “Official recognition of BPD is relatively new, and diagnosing it is often impeded by lack of awareness and frequent co-occurrence with other conditions, such as depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, anxiety, and eating disorders;
- “Despite its prevalence, enormous public health costs, and the devastating toll it takes on individuals, families, and communities, BPD only recently has begun to command the attention it requires;
- “It is essential to increase awareness of BPD among people suffering from this disorder, their families, mental health professionals, and the general public by promoting education, research, funding, early detection, and effective treatments; and
- “The National Education Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder and the National Alliance on Mental Illness has requested that Congress designate May as Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month as a means of educating our Nation about this disorder, the needs of those suffering from it, and its consequences.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 1005 was introduced on February 27, 2008, and referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which held a mark-up and reported the bill on March 13, 2008, as amended, by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution does not authorize expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

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H.Res. 1021—Supporting the goals, ideals, and history of National Women’s History Month (*Woolsey, D-CA*)

Order of Business: H.Res. 1021 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res. 1021 would express the sense that the House:

- “Supports the goals and ideals of National Women’s History Month;
- “Recognizes and honors the women and organizations in the United States that have fought for and continue to promote the teaching of women’s history; and
- “Reaffirms its commitment to promoting National Women’s History Month, which this year honors female artists.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “The purpose of National Women’s History Month is to increase awareness and knowledge of women’s involvement in history;
- “As recently as the 1970s, women’s history was rarely included in the kindergarten through grade 12 curriculum and was not part of public awareness;
- “The Education Task Force of the Sonoma County (California) Commission on the Status of Women initiated a ‘Women’s History Week’ celebration in 1978 centered around International Women’s History Day, which is celebrated on March 8th;
- “In 1981, responding to the growing popularity of women’s history celebrations, Congress passed a resolution making Women’s History Week a national observance;
- “The popularity of women’s history celebrations has sparked a new interest in uncovering women’s forgotten heritage;
- “The President’s Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History was established to consider how best to acknowledge and celebrate the roles and accomplishments of women in American history;
- “The National Women’s History Museum was founded in 1996 as an institution dedicated to preserving, interpreting, and celebrating the diverse historic contributions of

women, and integrating this rich heritage fully into the Nation's teachings and history books;

- “The House of Representatives recognizes March, 2008, as National Women’s History Month; and
- “The theme of National Women’s History Month for 2008 is visionary female artists and their contribution to our cultural heritage.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 1021 was introduced on March 4, 2008, and referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which held a mark-up and reported the bill on March 13, 2008, as amended, by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution does not authorize expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

RSC Staff Contact: Andy Koenig; andy.koenig@mail.house.gov; 202-226-9717.

H.R. 5168—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 19101 Cortez Boulevard in Brooksville, Florida, as the “Cody Grater Post Office Building” (Brown-Waite, R-FL)

Order of Business: H.R. 5168 is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 5168 would designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 19101 Cortez Boulevard in Brooksville, Florida, as the “Cody Grater Post Office Building.”

Additional Background: Spc. Cody C. Grater of Spring Hill, Florida, was killed in Baghdad, Iraq, when his guard position was struck by a rocket propelled grenade on July 29, 2007. According to the Associated Press, Grater was a vehicle driver with the 407th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team. In a statement released shortly after Grater’s death, his parents said, “Our son died doing what he was proud of. It was his goal to make the Army his career, which he loved. He was proud of serving his country.”

Committee Action: H.R. 5168 was introduced on January 29, 2008, and referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which held a mark-up and reported the bill by voice vote on February 26, 2008.

Cost to Taxpayers: A CBO score for H.R. 5168 is unavailable, but the only costs associated with a U.S. post office renaming are those for sign and map changes, none of which significantly affect the federal budget.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits? A Committee Report citing compliance with rules regarding earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits was not available. Such a report is not required because the bill is being considered under a suspension of the rules.

Constitutional Authority: Although no committee report citing constitutional authority is available, Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to establish Post Offices and post roads.

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H.R. 5551—To amend title 11, District of Columbia Official Code, to implement the increase provided under the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2008, in the amount of funds made available for the compensation of attorneys representing indigent defendants in the District of Columbia courts, and for other purposes (*Davis, D-IL*)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 5551 would increase compensation of attorneys representing indigent defendants in the District of Columbia courts from \$65 per hour to \$80 per hour.

Additional Background: According to [House Report 110-560](#), attorneys representing indigent defendants in U.S. District Court are paid \$100 per hour. In D.C., however, attorneys practicing in the same capacity in D.C. courts are paid \$65 per hour. Because of the Home Rule Act, any change in the current rate of pay for attorneys in D.C. courts must be passed by Congress.

Committee Action: H.R. 5551 was introduced on March 6, 2008, and referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. On March 13, 2008, the committee held a mark-up and reported the bill by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: According to CBO, “the budget of the D.C. Courts system, including Defender Services, is funded by federal appropriations.” Therefore, CBO estimates that H.R. 5551 would cost \$7 million in FY 2009 and \$35 million over the FY 2009 through FY 2013 period.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits? The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, in [House Report 110-560](#), states that “H.R. 5551 does not include any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of rule XXI.”

Constitutional Authority: The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, in [House Report 110-560](#), cites constitutional authority in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (the “necessary and proper” clause).

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S. 550—A bill to preserve existing judgeships on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia (*Akaka, D-HI*)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 550 would increase the number of judges on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia from 58 to 61.

Additional Background: According to [Senate Report 110-256](#), the Superior Court of the District of Columbia is the local trial court in D.C. and includes civil, criminal, probate, and family courts. In 2002, President Bush signed the District of Columbia Family Court Act of 2001, in order to streamline the D.C. Family Court system. The bill required that at least 15 of the D.C. Superior Court’s 58 judges be Family Court judges. The bill also allowed for the court to exceed 58 judges in certain circumstances, to facilitate additional Family Court judges. When the number of judges serving in the Family Court reached 15 in 2003, there were 60 judges in the D.C. Superior Court, which is the maximum number allowed under the law.

Since that time, the size of the court has remained at 60 judges and non-Family Court vacancies cannot be filled until the total number of judges drops below 60. As a result, D.C. Superior Court nominees now wait up to a year to fill a vacant seat that existed before the passage of the District of Columbia Family Court Act of 2001. S. 550 is meant to ensure that vacancies in non-Family Courts are filled quickly by increasing the overall number of D.C. Superior Court judges from 58 to 61.

Committee Action: H.R. 550 passed in the Senate by unanimous consent on February 5, 2008, and was received in the House the following day. The bill was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which held a mark-up and reported the bill by voice vote on March 13, 2008.

Cost to Taxpayers: According to CBO, H.R. 550 would cost approximately \$1 million annually to pay for salaries, benefits, and support staff for additional judges.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits? [Senate Report 110-256](#) does not state compliance with House Rules regarding congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of rule XXI.”

Constitutional Authority: [Senate Report 110-256](#) does not cite constitutional authority.

RSC Staff Contact: Andy Koenig; andy.koenig@mail.house.gov; 202-226-9717.

H.Res. 945—Raising awareness and promoting education on the criminal justice system by establishing March 2008 as “National Criminal Justice Month” (Poe, R-TX)

Order of Business: H.Res. 945 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res. 945 would express the sense of the House that:

- “National Criminal Justice Month provides an opportunity to educate Americans on the criminal justice system; and
- ‘Americans should be aware of the causes and consequences of crime, how to prevent crime, and how to respond to crime; and
- “The House of Representatives urges policymakers, criminal justice officials, educators, victim service providers, nonprofits, community leaders, and others to promote awareness of how to prevent and respond to crime through National Criminal Justice Month.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “There are approximately three million Americans employed within the justice system;
- “Approximately seven million adults are on probation, parole, or are incarcerated;
- “Millions of Americans have been victims of crime and, consequently, lost income, incurred medical expenses, and suffered emotionally;
- “The cost of crime to individuals, communities, businesses, and the various levels of government exceeds the billions of dollars spent each year in administering the criminal justice system;

- “In 2006, fifty percent of Americans admitted they fear that their home would be burglarized when they are not home; thirty-four percent of American women feared that they would be sexually assaulted; and forty-four percent of Americans feared they would be a victim of a terrorist attack;
- “Approximately thirty-five percent of Americans have very little or no confidence in the criminal justice system and the negative effects of crime in regard to confidence in governmental agencies and overall social stability are immeasurable;
- “Crime rates have dropped since the early 1990s, but most Americans believe that the rate of crime is increasing;
- “Federal, State, and local governments increased their spending for police protection, corrections, judicial, and legal activities in fiscal year 2005 by 5.5 percent or \$204 billion; and
- “There is a need to educate Americans and to promote awareness within American society as to the causes and consequences of crime, as well as the strategies and developments for preventing and responding to crime.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 945 was introduced on January 28, 2008, and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. On February 4, 2008, the resolution was referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, which took no official action.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution does not authorize expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

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H.R. 1312— Arts Require Timely Service (ARTS) Act (*Berman, D-CA*)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 1312 would extend the time period that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is given to adjudicate special visa requests for certain artists and performers from 14 to 30 days. If DHS failed to process the visa request within 30 days, H.R. 1312 would require that the department provide specified artists and entertainers with “premium processing services” without charging a \$1,000 fee that is currently required by law.

Additional Background: Under current law, certain artists and entertainers wishing to enter the U.S. for performance purposes are granted a speedy process for non-immigrant visa adjudication. The DHS is required to process such requests within two weeks of receiving an application. However, CBO reports that it actually takes DHS about eight weeks to process the applications.

Such delays have caused problems for American groups attempting to bring entertainers and artists to the U.S. to perform temporarily. DHS allows for groups who wish to pay \$1,000 for “premium processing services” to have applications adjudicated faster. H.R. 1312 would extend the initial time the DHS is given to process a request to 30 days and waive the fee for premium processing services if the application is not adjudicated by that time.

Non-immigrant visas under this legislation may be given to an alien who:

- “Has extraordinary ability in the sciences, arts, education, business, or athletics which has been demonstrated by sustained national or international acclaim or, with regard to motion picture and television productions a demonstrated record of extraordinary achievement, and whose achievements have been recognized in the field through extensive documentation, and seeks to enter the United States to continue work in the area of extraordinary ability; or
- “Seeks to enter the United States temporarily and solely for the purpose of accompanying and assisting in the artistic or athletic performance by an alien who is admitted under clause (i) for a specific event or events.” ([8 U.S.C. 1101\(a\)\(15\)\(O\)](#)).

Committee Action: H.R. 1312 was introduced on March 5, 2007, and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law. On September 25, 2007, a subcommittee mark-up was held and the bill was forwarded to the full committee by a vote of 7-5. On November 7, 2007, the full committee held a mark-up and reported the bill, as amended, by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: According to CBO, H.R. 1312 would not have a significant cost to the government. CBO estimates that the bill could reduce the number of premium processing service fees that DHS collects, but that the reduction “would not be significant in any year.”

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits? [Committee Report 110-540](#) states that, “H.R. 1312 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of Rule XXI.”

Constitutional Authority: The Committee on the Judiciary, in [House Report 110-540](#), cites constitutional authority in Article I, Section 8, Clause 4, which grants Congress the power to “establish a uniform rule of naturalization.”

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H.Res. 1061—Commemorating the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and encouraging people of the United States to pause and remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and for other purposes” (Lewis, D-GA)

Order of Business: H.Res.1061 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res.1061 would express the sense that the House encourages all Americans to:

- “Pause and remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on this, the 40th anniversary of his death;
- “Commemorate the legacy of Dr. King, so that, as Dr. King hoped, ‘one day this Nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal’; and
- “Remember the message of Dr. King and rededicate themselves to Dr. King’s goal of a free and just United States.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “40 years ago on April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the moral leader of America, was taken from us all too soon by an assassin’s bullet, while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was to lead sanitation workers in protest against low wages and intolerable working conditions;
- “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., while just one man, changed America forever in a few short years through his preaching of nonviolence and passive resistance;
- “Dr. King was the preeminent civil rights advocate of his time, leading the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s and earning world-wide recognition as an eloquent and articulate spokesperson for equality;
- “Dr. King was a champion of nonviolence who fervently advocated nonviolent resistance as the strategy to end segregation and racial discrimination in America, and in 1964, at age 35, he became the youngest man to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition for his efforts;
- “Through his work and reliance on nonviolent protest, Dr. King was instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965;
- “In the face of hatred and violence, Dr. King preached a doctrine of nonviolence and civil disobedience to combat segregation, discrimination, and racial injustice, and believed that people have the moral capacity to care for other people;
- “Dr. King awakened the conscience and consciousness of the United States and used his message of hope to bring people together to build the ‘Beloved Community’, a community of justice, at peace with itself;
- ‘Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., through his persistence, raw courage, and faith brought about a nonviolent revolution in America without firing a single bullet; and
- “Our country and our society are better because of what he did and what he said.”

Committee Action: H.Res.1061 was introduced on March 31, 2008, and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, which took no official action.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution does not authorize expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

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