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Citation: 1 Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act of P.L. 106-81 113 Stat. 1286 October 26 1999 S3708 1999

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Tue Apr 16 16:58:43 2013

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The last piece of this bill would encourage greater individual responsibility for retirement planning. By allowing a taxpayer to contribute more into an IRA without being taxed, more individuals will contribute more to their own retirement. The end result would be less reliance and less strain on Social Security and other entitlement programs. The more Congress can lead the way in weaning ourselves off of federal entitlements by encouraging individual retirement planning, the more government will shrink while increasing its efficiency.

I conclude by inviting my colleagues to take a good look at this bill and work with me on reasonable changes and to support its passage.

By Mr. BURNS (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. DORGAN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 800. A bill to promote and enhance public safety through the use of 9-1-1 as the universal emergency assistance number, further deployment of wireless 9-1-1 service, support of States in upgrading 9-1-1 capabilities and related functions, encouragement of construction and operation of seamless, ubiquitous, and reliable networks for personal wireless services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

E-911 ACT OF 1999

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I am here today to talk about some good news for a change. I want to introduce the "E-911 Act of 1999." The purpose of this legislation is to improve 911. By linking some of the amazing innovations in wireless technology to 911 and medical and emergency response professionals we bring our 911 systems into the 21st century.

All kinds of technologies exist today that can greatly reduce response time to emergencies and help victims get the right kind of medical attention quickly. But right now these technologies are not connected in ways that can be used for emergencies. That's why this effort to upgrade our 911 systems across the nation is so important and necessary.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has conducted studies showing that crash-to-care time for fatal accidents is about a half hour in urban areas. In rural areas, which covers most of my home state of Montana, that crash-to-care time almost doubles. On average, it takes just shy of an hour to get emergency attention to crash victims in rural areas. Almost half of the serious crash victims who do not receive care in that first hour die at the scene of the accident. That's a scary statistic.

In 1997 there were 37,280 fatal motor vehicle crashes in the United States—41,967 people died as a result. Of that number, 2,098 were children. Now obviously there is no piece of legislation that can instantly prevent these kinds of tragedies. But there are definitely things we can do to help reduce them. Upgrading our 911 response systems, which this legislation promotes, is a solid step toward preventing many horrible tragedies.

Drew Dawson, who is the director of the Montana Emergency Medical Services Bureau and the president of the National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Directors, strongly supports the Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act of 1999. He tells me that the bill will help bring better wireless 911 coverage to Montana and will enhance our statewide Trauma Care System. Mr. Dawson believes this legislation will help him and his emergency folks do their jobs better, which means it will help them save more lives than they already do.

I have to say a word about all of the good work that folks like Drew Dawson in Montana and other emergency professionals do all over the country. The United States has the most skilled and dedicated group of medical and emergency professionals in the world. We need to give them better tools. There is technology out there that can help these professionals and that can help all of us citizens, if, God forbid, we ever find ourselves in an emergency situation needing this kind of help. The E-911 Act of 1999 will help all of us and will make our emergency services even better than they are today.

Mr. President, Let me take a moment to summarize the important sections of this bill.

It makes Congressional findings and specifies the purpose of the Act. The purpose of the Act is "to encourage and facilitate the prompt deployment throughout the United States of a seamless, ubiquitous, and reliable end-to-end infrastructure for communications, including wireless communications, to meet the Nation's public safety and other communications needs."

It assigns to the Federal Communications Commission, and any agency or entity to which it has delegated authority under Section 251 of the Communications Act of 1934, the duty to designate the number 911 as the universal emergency telephone number within the United States for reporting an emergency to appropriate authorities and requesting assistance. The universal number would apply both to wireless and wireline telephone service. The Commission, and any agency or entity, must establish appropriate periods for geographic areas in which 911 is not in use as an emergency telephone number to transition to the use of 911.

It establishes a principle of parity between the wireless and wireline telecommunications industries in protection from liability for: (1) the provision of telephone services, including 911 and emergency warning service, and (2) the use of 911 and emergency warning service. The bill provides for wireless providers of telephone service to receive at least as much protection under Federal, State or local law from liability as local exchange companies receive in providing telephone services. States cannot impose procedural barriers, such as requiring wireless providers to file tariffs, as a condition for wireless providers to receive the substantive protection from liability for which the legislation provides. The bill also provides for users of wireless 911 service to receive at least as much protection from liability under Federal, State or local law as users of wireline 911 service receive.

It amends Section 222 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 222) to provide appropriate privacy protection for call location information concerning the user of a commercial mobile service, including such information provided by an automatic crash notification system. The provision authorizes disclosure of such information to emergency dispatch providers and emergency service personnel in order to respond to the user's call for emergency services. The provision also is intended to allow disclosure of such information to the next-of-kin or legal guardian of a person as necessary in connection with the furnishing of medical care to such person as a result of an emergency. Finally, the customer of a commercial mobile radio service may grant broader authority (for example, in the customer's written subscription agreement with the service provider) for the use of, disclosure of, or access to call location information concerning users of the customer's commercial mobile service communications instrument (e.g., the customer's wireless telephone), but the customer must grant such authority expressly and in advance of such use, disclosure or access.

It provides definitions for terms used in the legislation.

That is the long version of what this bill is about. The short version is: it's about saving lives. Mr. President, I hope all of my colleagues will join me and help pass this important legislation.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I am pleased to cosponsor and support the E-911 Act of 1999, which has been introduced by Senator BURNS. I commend Senator BURNS for his outstanding work on this legislation which will help build a national wireless communications system and save lives.

Mr. President, I want to make sure that Americans everywhere can dial 9-1-1 to summon prompt assistance in an emergency. When a person is seriously injured, every second counts. In fact, medical trauma and public safety professionals speak of a "golden hour"—the first hour after serious injury when the greatest percentage of lives can be saved. The sooner that the seriously injured get medical help, the greater the chance of survival. And prompt notification to the authorities is the first critical step in getting medical assistance to the injured.

I believe that injured Americans should be able to get emergency medical assistance as quickly as possible.

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Over 60 million Americans carry wireless telephones. Some of these people own them specifically for safety reasons, in order to summon help in an emergency. Others would be willing to use their phones to report emergencies to the authorities.

But in many parts of the country when a person who is seriously injured—or a frantic bystander—calls 9-1-1 on their wireless telephone, nothing happens. Although many Americans think that 9-1-1 is already a national emergency number everywhere, it isn't. There are many places in America where 9-1-1 isn't the right number to call for help. The rule in America ought to be uniform and simple—if you have an emergency wherever you are, dial 9-1-1. This bill reduces the danger of not knowing what number to call, by making 9-1-1 the universal emergency telephone number.

Mr. President, I also believe that we also need to tie our citizens through their wireless telephones to emergency medical centers, police and firefighters so that they can get lifesaving assistance even when they are too injured to make a 9-1-1 call, or can make the call but cannot give their location. This bill supports the upgrading of 9-1-1 systems so that they can deliver more information, like location and automatic crash information data which will better enable emergency services to reach those incapacitated by injury. This legislation also promotes the expansion of the areas covered by wireless telephone service, so that more people can use wireless phones in an emergency. Because if a wireless telephone isn't within range of a wireless tower, a wireless call can't go through.

Mr. President, I would like to see an America where more people in more places can call 9-1-1 and quickly get the right help in emergencies. This legislation will help reduce medical response time for millions of Americans, by helping to make sure that people can use their wireless phones to call 9-1-1 immediately and get the ambulances rolling

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Commerce Committee on this important life-saving legislation, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.

By Mr. SANTORUM:

S. 801. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the tax on beer to its pre-1991 level; to the Committee on Finance.

REPEALING THE BEER TAX

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation pertaining to the federal excise tax on beer.

Many people are not aware that they pay enormous hidden taxes when they purchase any number of consumer products. The beer tax is one significant example of such a hidden tax. Bearing a disproportionate tax burden, forty-three percent of the cost of beer is comprised of both state and federal taxes.

The federal government doubled its tax on beer eight years ago. Today, though it is one of the more regressive taxes, the 100 percent beer tax increase remains as the only "luxury tax" enacted as part of the 1991 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act. While taxes on furs, jewelry, and yachts have been repealed through subsequent legislation, the federal beer tax remains in place with continued far reaching effects, including the loss of as many as 50,000 industry jobs. My legislation seeks to correct this inequity and will restore the level of federal excise tax to the pre-1991 tax rate.

Mr. President, I offer this bill as companion legislation to H.R. 1366 introduced by Representative PHIL ENGLISH.

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

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

S. 801

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

SECTION 1. REPEAL OF 1990 TAX INCREASE ON BEER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 5051(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to imposition and rate of tax on beer) is amended by striking "$18" and inserting "$9".

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

By Mr. SANTORUM (for himself, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. GREGG, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. SPECTER, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 802. A bill to provide for a gradual reduction in the loan rate for peanuts, to repeal peanut quotas for the 2002 and subsequent crops, and to require the Secretary of Agriculture to purchase peanuts and peanut products for nutrition programs only at the world market price; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

REFORM OF THE FEDERAL PEANUT PROGRAM

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a bill that would bring common sense reform to the federal peanut commodity program. This legislation would phase out the peanut quota program over three years, with the quota being eliminated in crop year 2002. I am joined today by several colleagues in this reform effort.

Under this legislation, the price support for peanuts that are grown for edible consumption is gradually reduced each year from the current support price of $610 per ton to $500 per ton by 2001. In the year 2002 and ensuing crop years, there would be no quotas on peanuts, and the Secretary of Agriculture would be required to make the non-recourse loan available to all peanut farmers at 85 percent of their estimated market value. This measure is consistent with the non-recourse loan programs available for other agriculture commodities.

Another component of this peanut reform bill would allow additional peanuts, those produced in excess of the farmer's quota poundage, to be used for sale to the school lunch program.

Mr. President, the federal peanut program, born in the 1930's during an era of massive change and dislocation in agriculture, is sorely out of place in today's agricultural sector. Other farm commodities are seeking new export opportunities abroad, building new markets and helping to improve our national balance of trade, however, the peanut industry is building new barriers to protect itself. The quota system stifles freedom for farmers, and it fosters a set of economic expectations that cannot be sustained without continued government intervention. Moreover, failure to reform this program costs consumers between $300-500 million annually, adding to the cost of feeding programs for low-income Americans.

In short, this program must be changed. As we have learned from changes made to other commodity programs, reform does not happen overnight. This proposal provides for a fair transition that will enable farmers and lenders to adjust their expectations to the marketplace. Following completion of the phase-out period, the peanut program will operate like most other agricultural commodities.

Mr. President, I am pleased to have many of my Senate colleagues join me today as cosponsors of this measure, including Senators CHAFEE, DEWINE, FEINGOLD, GREGG, BROWNBACK, SPECTER, and COLLINS.

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

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

S. 802

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

SECTION 1. REDUCTION IN LOAN RATES FOR PEANUTS.

Section 155(a) of the Agricultural Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7271(a)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

"(2) LOAN RATE.—The national average quota loan rate for quota peanuts shall be as follows:

"(A) $610 per ton for the 1999 crop.

"(B) $550 per ton for the 2000 crop.

"(C) $500 per ton for the 2001 crop.".

SEC. 2. NONRECOURSE LOANS FOR 2002 AND SUBSEQUENT CROPS OF PEANUTS.

Effective beginning with the 2002 crop of peanuts, section 155 of the Agricultural Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7271) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 155. PEANUT PROGRAM.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—

"(1) LOANS.—The Secretary shall make nonrecourse loans available to producers of peanuts for each of the 2002 and subsequent crops of peanuts.

"(2) RATE.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretary shall offer to all peanut producers nonrecourse loans at a level not less than 85 percent of the simple average price

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