

Indeed, Stan's focus and dedication has always been geared towards improving patient care in our hospitals and nursing homes and preserving the collective voice of workers' rights. He demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to workers and their families, which extended to their safety and health on and off the job.

Over the years, Stan organized the labor management committees at our hospitals to educate and train health care employees and worked to secure funding for training and professional growth programs. Moreover, Stan helped craft the Rhode Island Safe Patient Handling Act, a State law that has helped reduce the number of injuries suffered by patients and caretakers in health care facilities. And, after many years of Stan's efforts and activism, another bill was signed into Rhode Island law preventing hospitals from forcing mandatory overtime for nurses and nurse's aides, except in the case of emergencies.

But these are only a handful of Stan's achievements. And while these accomplishments came with great sacrifice and setbacks, Stan never quit and never stopped fighting to elevate the dignity and value of workers.

Stan's career represents a lifetime of distinguished service to his country, his State, and above all his members.

Now, after a well-deserved retirement, congratulations and thank you. I wish you and your wife, Cynthia, your children, Caitlin and John, the very best in all your future endeavors. ●

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 300. A bill to prevent abuse of Government charge cards; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. COBURN):

S. 301. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to make technical and minor modifications to the positive train control requirements under chapter 201; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 302. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to issue right-of-way permits for a natural gas transmission pipeline in non-wilderness areas within the boundary of Denali National Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 303. A bill to amend the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 to require the Bureau of Land Management to provide a claimant of a small miner waiver from claim maintenance fees with a period of 60 days after written receipt of 1 or more defects is provided to the claimant by registered mail to cure the 1 or more defects or pay the

claim maintenance fee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 304. A bill to amend the Alaska National Gas Pipeline Act to improve the Alaska pipeline construction training program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself and Mrs. HUTCHISON):

S. 305. A bill to repeal a prohibition on the use of certain funds for the termination of the Constellation program of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WEBB (for himself, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 306. A bill to establish the National Criminal Justice Commission; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER:

S. 307. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 217 West King Street, Martinsburg, West Virginia, as the "W. Craig Broadwater Federal Building and United States Courthouse"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN of Ohio):

S. 308. A bill to extend trade adjustment assistance and certain trade preference programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LUGAR (for himself, Mr. KERRY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. HAGAN, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 309. A bill to authorize the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment (normal trade relations treatment) to the products of Moldova; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 310. A bill to end unemployment payments to jobless millionaires; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 311. A bill to provide for the coverage of medically necessary food under Federal health programs and private health insurance; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. Res. 46. A resolution requiring that legislation considered by the Senate to be confined to a single issue; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 35

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 35, a bill to establish background check procedures for gun shows.

S. 102

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the names of the Senator from West Vir-

ginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 102, a bill to provide an optional fast-track procedure the President may use when submitting rescission requests, and for other purposes.

S. 148

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 148, a bill to repeal the provision of law that provides automatic pay adjustments for Members of Congress.

S. 272

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 272, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify and confirm the authority of the Environmental Protection Agency to deny or restrict the use of defined areas as disposal sites for the discharge of dredged or fill material.

AMENDMENT NO. 14

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 14 proposed to S. 223, a bill to modernize the air traffic control system, improve the safety, reliability, and availability of transportation by air in the United States, provide modernization of the air traffic control system, reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 49

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 49 proposed to S. 223, a bill to modernize the air traffic control system, improve the safety, reliability, and availability of transportation by air in the United States, provide modernization of the air traffic control system, reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 300. A bill to prevent abuse of Government charge cards; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, we often use the metaphor of credit cards to talk about uncontrolled government spending, but in some cases, wasteful government spending is quite literally enabled by the use of charge cards in the hands of government bureaucrats. That is why I am reintroducing the Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act. This legislation will ensure that Federal departments and agencies have in place, and keep in place, the kinds of safeguards necessary to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse with government issued charge

cards. We have made a lot of progress since I first started shining the spotlight on this issue with the help of the Government Accountability Office, GAO. This legislation will secure the gains we have made to prevent any backsliding while adding in extra mechanisms to prevent and detect misuse of government charge cards.

In 1998, the General Service Administration, GSA, entered into a contract with a set of commercial banks to utilize charge cards, not unlike those used by businesses large and small and millions of consumers worldwide. This is called the SmartPay® program. These government charge cards include government purchase cards, which are used for acquisition of commercial goods and services by agencies and paid directly by the agency, and government travel cards, which are used to pay for individual government travel expenses and issued in the name of individual government employees.

Government charge cards were intended as a low cost method to streamline government acquisition and travel processes. The whole idea was to adopt the best practices of the commercial sector. In the business sector, charge cards have been a success. They save time and money. The main reason they work so well is because the control environment in the private sector is rock solid and accountability is a fact of life. When a business is spending its own money, it is going to be sure that it accounts for every penny or it won't stay in business. As a result, corporate America, if an employee is caught abusing a card, they'll lose it or get fired.

It is certainly a good idea for government to learn lessons from the business sector. However, there are certain fundamental differences between the private sector and the governmental sector that call for extra vigilance, mainly the fact that government spends other people's money. Human nature being what it is, most people are not nearly as careful spending other people's money as they would be spending their own.

Sure enough, when the SmartPay® program was first implemented, Federal departments and agencies did not take near the care that a private business would when handing out company charge cards. When I started looking into this with the GAO, we uncovered blatant examples of wasteful spending. Government employees were using their government-issued charge cards to bypass any authorization and approval procedures and purchase items that had nothing to do with their official duties. We are talking about LA-Z-Boy reclining chairs, kitchen appliances, and even a sapphire ring being paid for with government purchase cards, and with the American taxpayer paying the bill no questions asked.

Government travel cards have been used for gambling, sporting events, concerts, cruises, and even gentlemen's clubs and legalized brothels. While

travel cards are not paid directly with taxpayers' money like purchase cards, failure by employees to repay these cards results in the loss of millions of dollars in rebates to the Federal Government. Also, when credit card companies are forced to charge off bad debt, they raise interest rates and fees on everyone else.

A series of GAO reports over the last decade have identified an inadequate and inconsistent control environment across numerous Federal agencies with respect to both government purchase cards and government travel cards. This has led to millions of dollars in taxpayers' money wasted. In some cases purchases were outright fraudulent, and others were of questionable need or were unnecessarily expensive. In each report it has issued, the GAO has made recommendations about what kind of controls need to be implemented to prevent such abuses from occurring in the future. In many cases, the same controls were often missing or inadequate, and therefore the same recommendations are repeated in report after report. One agency would promise to clean up its act, but then we would find the exact same problems with another. That is why I worked to develop legislation that would incorporate GAO's recommendations regarding some of the most basic controls needed in every agency to prevent abuse of government charge cards.

As a result of the pressure applied by the relentless oversight of Congress, the GAO, and agency Inspectors General, we have seen some progress toward establishing a better control environment. In fact, the Office of Management and Budget has issued to Federal agencies a circular that seeks to bring about many of the controls we identified. However, this progress would not have been possible without the continual spotlight being shone on the problem and the threat of congressional action.

In addition to requiring the most important internal controls across the government, the bill requires all Federal agencies to establish penalties for violations, including dismissal when circumstances warrant. This is necessary not only so that taxpayers know that those who would squander their money are held accountable, but also to send a message to other government employees that such behavior will not be tolerated. The bill also increases oversight by providing that each agency Inspector General periodically conduct risk assessments and audits to identify fraud and improper use of government charge cards. We have had great success working with Inspectors General using techniques like data mining to reveal instances of improper use of government charge cards. Having this information on an ongoing basis will help maintain and strengthen a rigorous system of internal controls to prevent future instances of waste, fraud, and abuse with government charge cards.

This legislation has been revised a number of times with considerable input from the GAO as well as the Inspector General community and other stakeholders. In crafting the very carefully thought out bill before us today, I have appreciated the help and support provided by Chairman LIEBERMAN and Ranking Member COLLINS, who have again joined me as original cosponsors of this bill. The version I have introduced today is the same bill that passed the Senate in the last Congress and I look forward to seeing it pass both houses of Congress and enacted into law in the very near future. That day, the American taxpayers will be able to rest just a little easier knowing that at least one avenue to potentially waste their hard earned money has been blocked.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 302. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to issue right-of-way permits for a natural gas transmission pipeline in nonwilderness areas within the boundary of Denali National Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to reintroduce legislation that I first offered in 2009 to authorize a right-of-way for construction of an Alaska in-state natural gas pipeline. The bill is being co-sponsored by my colleague from Alaska, Sen. MARK BEGICH. The pipeline would run along the State's main highway from Fairbanks to Anchorage, including 7 miles of highway through Denali National Park and Preserve.

While many in this body are familiar with plans for a large-volume natural gas pipeline to run from the Prudhoe Bay oil fields to the Lower 48 States, there is concern that the large-diameter pipeline will not be finished in time to provide needed gas to Southcentral Alaska—gas that is vital for electric generation in Anchorage, the Mat-Su Borough, and Kenai Peninsula.

Currently, electricity in Alaska's southern Railbelt, as it is called, is largely generated by burning natural gas produced from the gas fields in Cook Inlet, south of Anchorage. Cook Inlet production has been falling for years and businesses have been forced to close as a result.

Serious concerns exist regarding the region's ability to produce sufficient gas for electric generation and home heating for Alaska's most populated area as early as the winter of 2014–15.

Given the pace of planning for construction of the main line, it is unlikely that a larger Alaska natural gas pipeline will be able to deliver gas until 2020 or later—6 or more years too late to aid Southcentral Alaska's growing need for natural gas. Thus, to provide a reliable natural gas supply, Alaska is considering investing in a smaller pipeline to meet medium term demand.