



**Legislative Bulletin.....May 10, 2005**

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**Summary of the Bills Under Consideration Today:**

**Total Number of New Government Programs: 1**

**Total Cost of Discretionary Authorizations: No new funds**

**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: 0**

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

**H.R. 1023—Charles “Pete” Conrad Astronomy Awards Act  
(Rohrabacher)**

**Order of Business:** The bill is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

An identical bill last Congress, H.R. 912, passed the House by a vote of 404-1 on March 3, 2004: <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2004/roll035.xml>

**Summary:** H.R. 1023 would direct NASA to establish an awards program to recognize amateur astronomers' discoveries of near-Earth-orbit asteroids. Each year, assuming eligible discoveries, the program would give two \$3,000 awards, as follows:

- one to the amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who in the preceding calendar year discovered the intrinsically brightest near-Earth asteroid among the near-Earth asteroids that were discovered during that year by amateur astronomers or groups of amateur astronomers; and
- one to the amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who made the greatest contribution to the cataloguing of near-Earth asteroids during the preceding year.

Recommendations for the awards would be made by the Minor Planet Center of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory and finalized by the NASA Administrator. The awards could only go to American citizens or permanent U.S. residents whose respective employers do not provide them any funding, payment, or compensation for outer space observation and to such people who are not professional astronomers in any capacity.

**Additional Background:** According to information provided by NASA, near-Earth asteroids are rocks, the bits and pieces left over from the initial agglomeration of the inner planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars) some 4.6 billion years ago, that have been nudged by the gravity of nearby planets into orbits that bring them relatively close to Earth. Though most remaining asteroids exist today between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, some asteroids get knocked out of such orbit and resettle in orbits near Earth's orbit. The scientific interest in such asteroids (and near-Earth comets as well) is due largely to their status as the relatively unchanged remnant debris from the solar system formation process and due to the possibility that a larger asteroid could impact Earth. Such asteroids have impacted Earth before (<http://neo.jpl.nasa.gov/images/meteorcrater.html>), and some scientists theorize that the extinction of the dinosaurs was the result of a large asteroid or comet hitting Earth. To read more about such impacts, visit this webpage: <http://neo.jpl.nasa.gov/neo/target.html>

For more details on NASA's Near-Earth Object Program, visit this webpage: <http://neo.jpl.nasa.gov/>

The awards program is named in honor of Charles "Pete" Conrad, astronaut and space scientist. In September of 1962, NASA selected Conrad as an astronaut. His first flight was Gemini V, which established the space endurance record and placed the United States in the lead for man-hours in space. As commander of Gemini XI, Conrad helped to set a world altitude record. He then served as commander of Apollo XII, the second lunar landing. On Conrad's final mission, he served as commander of Skylab II, the first United States Space Station.

Conrad was born on June 2, 1930, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and died on July 8, 1999, from injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident in California. For more biographical information on Conrad, visit this webpage: <http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/conrad-c.html>

**Committee Action:** On March 17, 2005, the Science Committee marked up and by voice vote ordered the bill reported to the full House.

**Cost to Taxpayers:** CBO confirms that H.R. 1023 would not have a significant impact on the federal budget, as it would only authorize \$6,000 (plus small administrative costs) annually from sums otherwise authorized to be appropriated to NASA.

**Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?:** The bill would create one new program using existing funds.

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

**Constitutional Authority:** The Science Committee, in House Report 109-37, fails to cite a specific clause of constitutional authority. House Rule XIII, Section d(1), requires that all committee reports contain “a statement citing the *specific* powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the law proposed by the bill or joint resolution.” *[emphasis added]*

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### **H.Res. 193 — Expressing support to the organizers and participants of the historic meeting of the Assembly to Promote the Civil Society in Cuba on May 20, 2005, in Havana — *as introduced* (Mario Diaz-Balart)**

**Order of Business:** The resolution is scheduled for consideration on May 10, 2005, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

**Summary:** H.R. 193 would express support to the organizers and participants of the “historic meeting of the Assembly to Promote the Civil Society in Cuba on May 20, 2005, in Havana.” The resolution also urges the international community to support the Assembly’s mission to bring democracy to Cuba, and urges the Administration and international community to oppose any attempts by the Castro regime to repress Assembly organizers and participants. It also “shares the Assembly's pro-democracy ideals and believes that this Assembly and others will hasten Cuba's freedom.”

**Additional Information:** According to various websites promoting the Assembly to Promote Civil Society in Cuba, the Assembly is a coalition of 365 independent civil society groups within Cuba.

Among other things, the Assembly’s “course of action is based upon 1) the formation of a democratic culture, 2) the development of a social movement, and 3) the use of all available means to combat poverty and seek the betterment of the community’s life conditions.”

**Committee Action:** H.Res. 193 was introduced on April 6, 2005, and referred to the Committee on International Relations’ Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere. A Committee mark-up session was held on April 27, 2005, when the resolution was reported to the full House by unanimous consent.

**Cost to Taxpayers:** The resolution authorizes no expenditure.

**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. 142 — Supporting the goals and ideals of a “Rotary International Day” and celebrating and honoring Rotary International on the occasion of its centennial anniversary — *as introduced* (Schakowsky)**

**Order of Business:** The resolution is scheduled for consideration on May 10, 2005, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

**Summary:** H.Res. 142 would “express support for the goals and ideals of Rotary International Day (February 23, 2005) to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Rotary International.” The resolution would also recognize Rotary International’s “service to improving the human condition in communities throughout the world.”

**Additional Information:** According to Rotary International’s website, “Rotary is a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders that provides humanitarian service, encourages high ethical standards in all vocations, and helps build goodwill and peace in the world. Approximately 1.2 million Rotarians belong to more than 31,000 Rotary clubs located in 167 countries.” Rotary is “the world’s first service club,” founded as the Rotary Club of Chicago, Illinois, in 1905 by Paul P. Harris. Mr. Harris was an attorney “who wished to recapture in a professional club the same friendly spirit he had felt in the small towns of his youth.” The name “Rotary” was derived from the early practice of rotating meetings among members’ offices.

**Committee Action:** H.Res. 142 was introduced on March 8, 2005, and referred to the Committee on Government Reform. A Committee mark-up session was held on March 16, 2005, when the resolution was reported to the full House by unanimous consent.

**Cost to Taxpayers:** The resolution authorizes no expenditure.

**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. 86 — Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby (*Hoyer*)**

**Order of Business:** The resolution is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, May 10, 2005, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Note: On April 28, 2004, the House authorized the use of the Capitol grounds for the 2004 Soap Box Derby by voice vote (H.Con.Res. 376).

**Summary:** Under the resolution, the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby Association is permitted to sponsor the soap box derby races on the Capitol Grounds on June 18, 2005.

**Additional Background:** The Greater Washington Soap Box Derby is sponsored by WANADA (Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association) and other Washington area dealers and businesses. This 64-year-old annual event offers motorless racing competition for children, aged nine to 16 who build their own cars. For more information: <http://www.dcssoapboxderby.org/>

**Committee Action:** The resolution was introduced on March 3, 2005, and referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which did not consider the resolution.

**Cost to Taxpayers:** Though a cost estimate is not available for H.Con.Res. 86, CBO estimated that the event from previous years' would result in no significant cost to the federal government, because it would require that the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby Association assume responsibility for all expenses and liabilities associated with the event.

**Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?:** No.

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

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## **H.Con.Res. 135 — Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the D.C. Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run (Shuster)**

**Order of Business:** The resolution is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, May 10, 2005, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Note: On May 11, 2004, the House authorized the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 2004 D.C. Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run by voice vote (H.Con.Res.389).

**Summary:** The resolution authorizes the 2005 District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run to be run through the Capitol grounds on June 10, 2005, as part of the journey of the Special Olympics torch to the District of Columbia Special Olympics summer games. It provides that the Capitol Police Board may take actions necessary to carry out the event and that the Architect of the Capitol may prescribe conditions for physical preparations.

**Additional Background:** The Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics is the movement's largest grass-roots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle. According to its website, more than 85,000 law enforcement officers around the world carried the “Flame of Hope” across 35 nations, raising awareness and funds for Special Olympics, and raising more than \$19 million in 2003 for Special Olympics.

(Source:[http://www.specialolympics.org/Special+Olympics+Public+Website/English/Support/Law Enforcement Torch Run/default.htm](http://www.specialolympics.org/Special+Olympics+Public+Website/English/Support/Law+Enforcement+Torch+Run/default.htm))

**Committee Action:** The resolution was introduced on March 17, 2004, and referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The Committee reported the resolution to the full House by unanimous consent on March 24, 2004.

**Cost to Taxpayers:** The resolution authorizes no expenditure.

**Constitutional Authority:** The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, in Report 108-468, finds authority under Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution (Powers of Congress) but fails to cite a specific clause.

**Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?:** No.

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

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## **H.Con.Res. 136—Supporting the goals and ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day (Shuster)**

**Order of Business:** The resolution is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 10, 2005, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

**Summary:** H.Con.Res. 136 authorizes the use of the Capitol Grounds on May 15<sup>th</sup> for the 24<sup>th</sup> annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service, in order to honor the law enforcement officers who died in the line of duty during 2004. The Grand Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its auxiliary are permitted under H.Con.Res. 136 to sponsor a public event and shall assume full responsibility for all expenses and liabilities incident to all activities associated with the event.

**Additional Background:** Peace officers include police officers, park police, correctional officers, and others involved in law enforcement. Based on preliminary estimates, 153 peace officers were killed in the line of duty in 2004. Since the first recorded police death in 1792, there have been more than 16,500 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. A total of 1,649 law enforcement officers died in the line of duty during the past 10 years, an average of one death every 53.5 hours or 164 per year. On average, more than 57,000 law enforcement officers are assaulted each year, resulting in some 17,000 injuries (Source <http://www.nleomf.com/TheMemorial/Facts/killedlod.htm>).

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy signed a proclamation that designated May 15<sup>th</sup> as Peace Officers Memorial Day. Over the past 22 years, over 3,000 law enforcement officers have been honored. In addition, Section 136 of title 36, United States Code, requests that the President issue each year a proclamation: 1) designating May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day in honor of federal, state, and local officers killed or disabled in the line of duty; 2) directing that the U.S. flag on federal buildings and property be flown at half-staff; and 3) encouraging citizens and state and local governments to observe Peace Officers Memorial Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**Committee Action:** On April 19, 2005, the resolution was introduced and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which did not consider it.

**Cost to Taxpayers:** The resolution authorizes no expenditure and is likely to result in no significant cost to the federal government, because it would require that The Grand Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its auxiliary assume responsibility for all expenses and liabilities associated with the event.

**Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?:** No.

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

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