

PRESERVING AMERICA'S ECONOMIC SECURITY

HEARING
BEFORE A
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

SPECIAL HEARING
FEBRUARY 5, 2011—CEDAR FALLS, IA

Printed for the use of the Committee on Appropriations



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

64-484 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2011

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
Fax: (202) 512-2104 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402-0001

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

DANIEL K. INOUE, Hawaii, *Chairman*

PATRICK J. LEAHY, Vermont	THAD COCHRAN, <i>Mississippi, Ranking</i>
TOM HARKIN, Iowa	MITCH MCCONNELL, <i>Kentucky</i>
BARBARA A. MIKULSKI, Maryland	RICHARD C. SHELBY, <i>Alabama</i>
HERB KOHL, Wisconsin	KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, <i>Texas</i>
PATTY MURRAY, Washington	LAMAR ALEXANDER, <i>Tennessee</i>
DIANNE FEINSTEIN, California	SUSAN COLLINS, <i>Maine</i>
RICHARD J. DURBIN, Illinois	LISA MURKOWSKI, <i>Alaska</i>
TIM JOHNSON, South Dakota	LINDSEY GRAHAM, <i>South Carolina</i>
MARY L. LANDRIEU, Louisiana	MARK KIRK, <i>Illinois</i>
JACK REED, Rhode Island	DANIEL COATS, <i>Indiana</i>
FRANK R. LAUTENBERG, New Jersey	ROY BLUNT, <i>Missouri</i>
BEN NELSON, Nebraska	JERRY MORAN, <i>Kansas</i>
MARK PRYOR, Arkansas	JOHN HOEVEN, <i>North Dakota</i>
JON TESTER, Montana	RON JOHNSON, <i>Wisconsin</i>
SHERROD BROWN, Ohio	

CHARLES J. HOUY, *Staff Director*
BRUCE EVANS, *Minority Staff Director*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND
EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES

TOM HARKIN, Iowa, *Chairman*

DANIEL K. INOUE, Hawaii	RICHARD C. SHELBY, Alabama
HERB KOHL, Wisconsin	THAD COCHRAN, Mississippi
PATTY MURRAY, Washington	KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, Texas
MARY L. LANDRIEU, Louisiana	LAMAR ALEXANDER, Tennessee
RICHARD J. DURBIN, Illinois	RON JOHNSON, Wisconsin
JACK REED, Rhode Island	MARK KIRK, Illinois
MARK PRYOR, Arkansas	LINDSEY GRAHAM, South Carolina
BARBARA A. MIKULSKI, Maryland	JERRY MORAN, Kansas
SHERROD BROWN, Ohio	

Professional Staff

ERIK FATEMI
MARK LAISCH
ADRIENNE HALLETT
LISA BERNHARDT
MICHAEL GENTILE
ALISON PERKINS-COHEN
LAURA FRIEDEL (*Minority*)
SARA LOVE RAWLINGS (*Minority*)
JENNIFER CASTAGNA (*Minority*)

Administrative Support

TERI CURTIN

CONTENTS

	Page
Opening Statement of Senator Tom Harkin	1
Prepared Statement of	4
Statement of Benjamin J. Allen, Ph.D., President, University of Northern Iowa	5
Prepared Statement of	8
Pell Grants, Affordability, and Accessibility	8
Federal Programs to Prepare Students for Success in College and Life	10
Final Observations	11
Prepared Statement of Emily Thatcher	13
“Literacy for All”—Students with Significant Disabilities	13
Statements From Individuals Who Have Experience	13
TRIO Programs	13
UNI Classic Upward Bound	15
Statement of William Dotzler, Iowa State Senator, 11th District	18
Prepared Statement of	20
Statement of Jerry Nelson, Field Office Manager, Social Security Administra- tion, Waterloo, Iowa	22
Prepared Statement of	23
Statement of Kim Young-Kent, Executive Director, Tri-County Child and Family Development Council, Waterloo, Iowa	25
Prepared Statement of	27
Statement of Jerry D. Durham, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, Chancellor, Allen College of Nursing, Waterloo, Iowa	30
Prepared Statement of	32
Statement of Mark A. Anderson, Assistant to the Bishop, Northeastern Iowa Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Waverly, Iowa	33
Prepared Statement of	35
Statement of Jonathan Keniston, Student, Hawkeye Community College, Wa- terloo, Iowa	36
Prepared Statement of	38

PRESERVING AMERICA'S ECONOMIC SECURITY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2011

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Cedar Falls, Iowa.

The subcommittee met at 12:33 p.m., in the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa, Hon. Tom Harkin (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senator Harkin.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR TOM HARKIN

Senator HARKIN. The Senate Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies will now come to order.

Good afternoon everyone, and welcome. This subcommittee normally meets, of course, in Washington, DC. But from time to time, I like to hold field hearings in Iowa on matters of critical importance to the State and the Nation, and this is one such occasion.

I might just again, as a way of putting it out, we have a Committee on Appropriations in both the House and the Senate, and on the Committee on Appropriations in the Senate, we have different subcommittees. For example, there is a Subcommittee on Defense that handles armed services, all our defense needs. There is, obviously, a Subcommittee on the Judiciary that handles our court systems and things like that.

Then we have the subcommittee that I chair, which is the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies. It has jurisdiction over the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the National Institutes of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and a number of other things like libraries.

So I just wanted to set the stage for that so you know where this is coming from.

Here in Cedar Falls and across America, there is serious concern about our record-high deficits. And we all understand that these deficits ultimately are unaffordable and unacceptable. We know that in the years immediately ahead, we must take aggressive and painful and unpopular steps to bring this deficit under control, both by cutting unnecessary spending and by raising revenues.

Certainly, we took an important first step by passing, I think, the new health reform law, which will reduce the deficit, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), by \$240 billion in the first decade and nearly \$1 trillion in the second decade. I also intend to push for a wide range of additional spending cuts. And I might just add, parenthetically, including eliminating some expensive cold war-era weapons systems.

However, I will strenuously oppose attempts to balance the budget on the backs of our most vulnerable and powerless people in our society, and I will insist that we continue to make prudent investments in education, infrastructure, biomedical research, the things that will help us, as President Obama said, to win the future.

So, yes, Government should make tough decisions to live within its means, just as ordinary working families do. But if you are a family trying to reduce your debt, that doesn't mean you pull your daughter out of college. It doesn't mean you forgo replacing the worn-out brakes on your car or you stop taking your diabetes medication. These things would put you and your family at risk.

Well, likewise, we need to maintain investments that are critical to the future of our American family even as we reduce overall spending. Now this is exactly my approach, as chair of this subcommittee that funds education, as I said, labor, health, and human services.

There are places in this jurisdiction where we can reduce spending. In fact, I have recently proposed eliminating more than 20 duplicative or inefficient programs in these areas. We must also continue to root out waste, fraud, and abuse in Medicare and Medicaid. Every \$1 that we spend on this effort returns \$6 to the U.S. Treasury. So we need to do more in this area.

Just last year, the Department of Health and Human Services, through their fraud and abuse prevention unit, recovered, actually recovered \$4 billion for the taxpayers of this country through their fraud and waste control unit. Yet the proposed cuts would cut that very entity that is out there getting money back for the taxpayers.

I will also insist on adequate funding for critical initiatives that help Iowans and all Americans to get a good education and acquire the skills they need to find jobs while also meeting the basic needs of seniors, children, those living in poverty, and people with disabilities. Those investments are at risk today.

This past week, the House of Representatives announced that they will make drastic reductions to Federal health, education, and labor programs. They cut out more than \$13 billion below the President's request for the current fiscal year. They haven't specified yet which programs they will cut. We will know more details next week, but they are going to hit Americans right where they live.

Just one example, we know that, overall, the House leadership wanted to roll back Federal funding to fiscal year 2008 levels. For a program like Head Start, that would mean cutting services to 120,000 kids across the country, about 1,000 here in the State of Iowa.

Today, we will hear from a local Head Start director, as well as other Iowans who are providing critical services to the people in this State with the help of Federal funding. I hope to learn a little

bit more from them about the impact of this funding in Iowa and what it would mean if that funding were drastically cut.

Now, before I introduce the witnesses, I am told that my staff handed out note cards when you signed in. If you have a question for me or for the witnesses, please write it out on that card. My staff will collect them near the end of the hearing. We will try to answer as many as time would allow at that time.

I will introduce the panel who is here, and then we will just kind of go from my right to my left in terms of testimony.

Dr. Benjamin J. Allen became the ninth president of the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) in 2006. He also co-chairs the Iowa Business Council's Education Excellence in Iowa Roundtable. Dr. Allen received his bachelor's degree from Indiana University, as well as master and doctorate degrees from the University of Illinois.

The Honorable William Dotzler, Senator Dotzler was elected in 2010 to his third term representing Senate District 11 in Waterloo. Senator Dotzler is chair of the Economic Development Budget Subcommittee and vice chair of the Economic Growth Committee. He also serves on the appropriations, labor, human resources, ways and means committees. Senator Dotzler received his associate's degree from North Iowa Area Community College and a bachelor's degree from University of Northern Iowa.

Gerald Nelson is the manager of the Social Security Administration field office in Waterloo. He has been with the Social Security Administration for 23 years. His assignments have taken him to offices throughout the Midwest in Ohio, Minnesota, Kansas City, Chicago, and now back here. He is a graduate of UNI.

Kim Young-Kent is the executive director of the Tri-County Child and Family Development Council. A native of Cedar Falls, she received her bachelor's degree from Buena Vista University in Storm Lake and her master's degree from UNI.

Dr. Jerry Durham serves as the chancellor and professor of nursing at the Allen College of Nursing. He previously served as vice chancellor of academic affairs and professor of nursing at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He holds six university degrees, including three in nursing, and a doctorate in higher education administration from St. Louis University.

Reverend Mark Anderson is the assistant to the bishop in the Northeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As part of his duties, Pastor Anderson serves as the liaison between the synod and its related institutions, including Barnabas Uplift, which we will hear about. He is a graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and Luther College in Decorah.

And last, we will have Jonathan Keniston. Mr. Keniston is currently a student at Hawkeye Community College, a native of Waterloo, a graduate of East High School, and an Air Force veteran.

So we welcome you all here. Your statements, and I have read them all over, will be made a part of the record in their entirety. And what I would like to ask is if you could just sum it up in 5 or 6 minutes, 7 minutes? I don't have a real clock here, but if you sum up your testimony, I would sure appreciate it.

And before I start with Dr. Allen, I have some other people I would like to introduce here. State Representative Bob Kressig, District 19, is here. And our county supervisor, John Miller, I am told, is here. Former State Senator Bill Heckroth is here, I am told. Hawkeye Community College president Dr. Linda Allen is here. Dr. Allen, thank you for being here.

And Congressman Braley was unable to be here today, but he has his person here, Jake Oeth, who is here from Congressman Braley's office. I hope I didn't miss anyone.

But thank you all for coming to this, I think, very important hearing at a critical time in our country when we are trying to figure out how to reduce our deficit and how to make sure that our country is able to grow and win the future, as President Obama said.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR TOM HARKIN

The Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies will now come to order.

Good afternoon, everyone. This subcommittee normally meets in Washington, DC, of course, but from time to time I hold field hearings in Iowa on matters of critical importance to our State. This is one such occasion.

Here in Cedar Falls, and across America, there is serious concern about record-high budget deficits. We all understand that these deficits, ultimately, are unaffordable and unsustainable. We know that, in the years immediately ahead, we must take aggressive, painful, and unpopular steps to bring the deficit under control—both by cutting unnecessary spending and by ending unaffordable tax breaks for the wealthy.

Certainly, we took an important first step by passing the new health reform law, which will reduce the deficit by nearly a quarter-trillion dollars in the first decade and nearly \$1 trillion in the second decade. I intend to push for a wide range of additional spending cuts, including eliminating expensive Cold War-era weapons systems.

However, I will strenuously oppose attempts to balance the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable and powerless people in our society. And I will insist that we continue to make prudent investments in education, infrastructure, and biomedical research—the things that will help us, as President Obama put it in his State of the Union address, “to win the future.”

Yes, Government should make tough decisions to live within its means—just as ordinary working families do, sitting around the kitchen table. But if you are a family trying to reduce debt, that doesn't mean you pull your daughter out of college. It doesn't mean you forgo replacing worn-out brakes on your car, or that you stop taking your diabetes medication. These things would put you and your family at risk. Well, likewise, we need to maintain investments that are critical to the future of our American family, even as we reduce spending overall.

This is exactly my approach as chair of the Senate appropriations subcommittee that funds labor, health and human services, and education. There are places within my jurisdiction where we can reduce spending—in fact, I have proposed eliminating more than 20 duplicative or inefficient programs in these areas.

We also must continue to root out waste, fraud, and abuse in Medicare and Medicaid. Every \$1 that we spend on this effort returns \$6 to the U.S. Treasury, so we need to do more in this area. My subcommittee will examine this issue later this month at a hearing in Washington.

However, I will insist on adequate funding for critical initiatives that help Iowans and all Americans to get a good education and acquire the skills they need to find jobs, while also meeting the basic needs of seniors, children, those living in poverty, and people with disabilities.

Those investments are at risk today. This past week, House Republicans announced that they will make drastic reductions to Federal labor, health, education, and programs—a cut of more than \$13 billion below the President's request for the current fiscal year. They didn't specify yet which programs they will cut—we should know more details next week—but we can be sure the cuts will be deep, and they will hit Americans right where they live.

Just one example: We know that, overall, House Republicans want to roll back Federal funding to fiscal year 2008 levels. For a program like Head Start, that could mean cutting services to 120,000 disadvantaged children across the country—960 in Iowa.

Today we will hear from a local Head Start director, as well as other Iowans who are providing critical services to people in this State with the help of Federal funding. I hope we will learn a little more from them about the impact of this funding in Iowa, and what it would mean if that funding were drastically cut.

Before I introduce the witnesses, my staff handed out notecards as you signed in. If you have a question for me or for the witnesses, please write it out on that card. My staff will collect the cards near the end of the hearing, and we'll try to answer some of the questions as time allows.

Senator HARKIN. So, with that, Dr. Allen, thank you again for your stewardship of this great university. Thank you for hosting us here today in this wonderful facility. And as one of our college presidents in our region's institutions, you have a front-row seat, so to speak, as to what is happening with students and to what is happening with education. And so, I appreciate your stewardship of the UNI. Thank you for being here, and please proceed.

STATEMENT OF BENJAMIN J. ALLEN, Ph.D., PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

Dr. ALLEN. Thank you, Senator Harkin.

It is an honor to have the opportunity to host this event. At UNI, we serve more than 13,000 students, 90 percent of whom are from the State of Iowa. Seventeen percent are first-generation students, and we define that as parents who do not have any type of college credit.

More than 75 percent of UNI students stay in Iowa for their first job or for graduate school. UNI can provide no better assistance in the area of economic development than to provide a quality education to these students who tend to stay in Iowa after graduation.

The availability of Federal student financial aid is foundational to access for many of our students, particularly the first-generation students. For the United States to compete in the global economy, its citizens must have education and skills that equal and exceed that of people from other countries.

In the past several decades, we have slipped as a country in terms of the percentage of adults with postsecondary education degrees. The most recent census data report shows that the percentage of Iowans with a bachelor's degree is below the national average.

Clearly, our universities must do their parts to make higher education affordable. We must continue to be vigilant in searching for ways to contain costs. Universities must also do more in providing financial aid of all types to provide opportunities for qualified students.

However, funding at the State level is making that goal more difficult to achieve. At the State level, funding for UNI has decreased over the past 2 years by approximately \$20 million. Despite this reduction, we have maintained a set-aside of at least 18 percent of tuition for financial aid to help provide more access to higher education. This constitutes more than \$12 million.

Furthermore, we have dedicated an additional \$10 million of university funds for student employment beyond the Federal Work

Study Program. Nearly 75 percent of our students work to help support their education.

A summary of financial programs at UNI is included in exhibit 1. I call to your attention the academic competitiveness and SMART grant programs, which have been eliminated for the 2011–2012 fiscal year. This will represent a loss of \$1 million financial aid here at UNI.

The economic recession has put considerable stress on families and their ability to afford higher education. Over the last 3 years at UNI, students receiving Pell grants increased from 25 percent to 30 percent, or nearly 700 students. During the 2009–2010 academic year, more than 3,300 UNI students were awarded a total of \$11 million in Pell grant money.

Yet the unmet needs of our students averages \$6,500 plus per person. If the amount available for Pell grants were to be reduced by 20 percent, as some in the Congress have suggested, the net effect could be a doubling of the out-of-pocket expenses for a student receiving the maximum Pell grant. Many students will face the unfortunate choice of dropping out or borrowing more.

At UNI, the level of debt upon graduation for students who have taken out loans has risen by 67 percent in the past 10 years, reaching an average of \$25,700. The data strongly suggest the impact of the importance of the Pell grant program and other need-based programs promoting student success at UNI. More compelling are the examples of talented people who are given an opportunity to earn a degree and eventually make significant contributions to the economy.

Ms. Danielle Stuck is a junior and working toward her psychology degree. It should be noted that she graduated from high school in Iowa. She is attending college in Iowa, and she plans to stay in Iowa after graduation. She is a first-generation college student who is a straight A student.

She is able to attend college only because of the help of the Pell grant and a few other scholarships. She stated that this aid made a huge difference in her life. She states, “To a young college student struggling to get by, the Federal Pell grant is truly a blessing.” What a loss it would be for us not to have this student have the opportunity to get an education.

We are very pleased to hear on February 1 that the Department of Education issued the Pell grant schedule, indicating that for the academic year 2011–2012 the maximum grant will be \$5,550. Senator Harkin, your leadership in securing the funding necessary to make that happen is greatly appreciated. The challenge now is to sustain that level.

As you know, UNI is the largest preparer of teachers in the State, with more than 500 new teachers graduating each year. And UNI is providing a leadership role in addressing the shortage of teachers in the area of special education. The work that is being done by our federally funded Center on Literacy, Language, and Disability Studies in Early Childhood Education, in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education, has particular promise for the future of early childhood and early elementary schoolchildren with special needs. We are working to build literacy, language, and

communication skills, which are the essential building blocks for all education.

Because of time, I will skip the comments from a consultant with the Iowa Department of Education. But she basically indicates that we are making tremendous progress in providing opportunities for these students to continue their education.

UNI places a high priority on providing a quality education to financially disadvantaged and minority students. Many students, particularly first generation, would never aspire to college were it not for the TRIO programs. This past academic year, UNI has served more than 3,300 students, individuals through its Educational Opportunity Center, Educational Talent Search, and Upward Bound programs. Two-thirds of these students were low income and first generation, and nearly one-half were minority.

These are the populations which form the base for America's economic future. You and I can cite many individuals who were helped or are being helped by the TRIO programs. Examples of success stories are provided in exhibit 3.

I would like to highlight how the TRIO program has helped one individual who is now helping the United States advance in a critically important area, and that is science education. What is more important than that for economic development?

Reygan Freeney, a former participant of the TRIO programs and a soon-to-be holder of a Ph.D. degree in chemistry from the University of Iowa, is an instructor in our Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. Ms. Freeney places an extraordinarily and well-deserved high value on the TRIO programs here at UNI.

She says, "I was a low-income African-American girl from a single-parent household, residing on the east side of Waterloo, Iowa, and labeled as a low-income, disadvantaged youth. The Classic Upward Bound Program challenged me to become a scholar," she states, "and the Student Support Service Program fostered its growth while I attended college."

She states, "I believe I was worth the investment of the TRIO programs. It provided me with awareness and empowerment that a lonely child growing up on the wrong side of the tracks did not have access to. Statistically speaking," she states, "I should not be where I am today. TRIO has equipped me with the tools for being a change agent and an investment in America's future."

Her statement indicates the profound impact that TRIO has on the individual.

In closing, we are right to talk about education and economic development. As you know, I am an economist. I appreciate those conversations. But we should also be talking about the values of this Nation. Offering every young man and woman and, indeed, displaced adults the opportunity to obtain the knowledge and tools needed for a successful, productive life is the right thing to do.

To make that happen, these students first have to recognize that the opportunity exists for them to get a degree and to be properly prepared for college. The TRIO programs address both of those issues. Pell grants, scholarships provided by the universities and others, and reasonable tuition levels address the issue of affordability. We are not doing enough now. To start doing less would be wrong.

I want to extend my deep appreciation to you, Senator Harkin, for your outstanding leadership and commitment to programs in education, health and human services, and the workforce. We must not let these programs erode.

Thank you very much.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you, Dr. Allen, for a very pointed and profound statement. Thank you very, very much.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. BENJAMIN J. ALLEN

INTRODUCTION

Senator Harkin, staff members, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak to the critical issue of "Preserving America's Economic Security." I have had the honor of serving as president of the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) for the past 4½ years. I have served as a faculty member or administrator at one of the Regents universities for the past 30 years. At UNI, we serve more than 13,000 students, 90 percent of whom are from the State of Iowa. Our students are predominantly undergraduate students. Seventeen percent are first-generation college students from families where neither parent has earned any college credits. More than 75 percent of UNI's students stay in Iowa for their first jobs or for graduate school. I have consistently argued that UNI can provide no better assistance in the area of economic development than to provide a quality education to these students who tend to stay in Iowa after graduation.

As an educator, I recognize that we are at a critical time in our Nation's history as our once world-leading status in educational achievement has slipped. At the heart of economic security is an educated and productive citizenry: our human capital. As an economist, I am well aware of the research that documents the direct relationship between educational attainment and economic productivity. Thus, it is essential that access to a high-quality education be equitably available to all students. The availability of Federal student financial aid is foundational to access for millions of students today and must be preserved, particularly for first-generation students who face significant challenges in making their dream of college a reality.

My testimony today will focus on the programs at UNI supported by Federal funds that increase the accessibility to higher education for more students and improve the quality of the education they receive. I will provide real examples of people who are being and have been helped to achieve their educational goals and are contributing to the State and national economies as the result of their participation in federally funded programs. Although my perspective is from UNI, I believe that similar examples and arguments can be made across Iowa and the Nation.

While financial aid is the largest single component of the Federal funding which the university receives, other programs from the U.S. Department of Education provide funding that serves a critical role in enabling students to attain the skills and abilities to be ready for higher education, beginning with the early childhood years. After discussing the value of the Pell Grant program for our students at UNI, I will highlight two other areas that help tremendously in providing access to not only education but to the opportunity to make a contribution to the economy and society. These two areas are teacher education, with an emphasis on special education, and the TRIO programs.

PELL GRANTS, AFFORDABILITY, AND ACCESSIBILITY

For the United States to compete in the global economy, its citizens must have the education and skills that equal and exceed that of people from other countries. In the past several decades, we have slipped as a country in terms of the percentage of adults with a post-secondary education degree. The most recent census data report that 24.3 percent of Iowans have a bachelor's degree, below the national average of 27.7 percent (U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2011). We must make higher education accessible and affordable to more Americans.

Clearly our universities must do their part to make higher education affordable. We at UNI understand that and we also know we must be vigilant in searching for ways to contain costs. We have taken steps to remove administrative costs by combining two colleges, combining two departments, eliminating a vice president position and a division, reducing general funds to athletics, combining other administrative positions, and eliminating programs that have low enrollment. We have also collaborated with the University of Iowa and Iowa State University in areas of infor-

mation technology, human resources, and facilities planning. We will continue to vigorously explore ways to maintain the quality of education provided with a minimum of resources.

Universities, including UNI, must also do more in providing financial aid of all types to provide opportunities for all qualified students. Having said that, however, funding at the State level is making that goal difficult to reach. At the State level, funding for UNI has decreased over the past 2 years by approximately \$20 million, a greater than 20 percent decrease in State funding. Despite this reduction we have maintained a set-aside of at least 18 percent of tuition for financial aid to help provide more access to higher education. This constitutes \$12,793,629. Furthermore, we have dedicated an additional \$10 million plus university funds for student employment beyond the Federal work study program. Nearly 75 percent of our students work to help support their education. In addition, UNI has focused its fundraising campaign on student scholarships. In October, we announced a \$10 million gift from Mark and Jill Oman that will fund scholarships. A summary of financial programs at UNI is included in exhibit 1. I call to your attention the Academic Competitiveness and Smart Grant programs which have been eliminated for 2011–2012. This will represent a loss of \$1 million in financial aid at UNI.

For fiscal year 2012, we are anticipating further budget reductions from the State. The Governor's budget proposes a 6 percent cut, approximately \$4.6 million, for UNI. It is obvious that we need the Federal Government to maintain its student aid and education program funds for access to be maintained and important education programs preserved.

The economic recession, from which we are still recovering, has put considerable stress on families and their ability to afford higher education. Over the last 3 years at UNI we have seen the proportion of students receiving Pell grants increase from 25 percent to 30 percent, or an additional 700 students. During the 2009–2010 academic year, more than 3,300 UNI students were awarded a total of about \$11 million, an increase of 42 percent more than the previous year. A portion of this increase is due to the opportunity for students to receive a summer Pell Grant. Yet, the unmet need of our students averages \$6,544 per person. If the amount available were to be reduced by 20 percent, as some in the Congress have suggested, the net effect could be a doubling of the out-of-pocket expenses for a student receiving the maximum Pell grant. Many students will face the unfortunate choice of dropping out or borrowing more.

At UNI, the level of debt upon graduation for students who have taken out loans has risen by 67 percent over the past 10 years, reaching an average of \$25,735 for our most recent graduating class. These large debt loads in themselves constitute a risk to economic security. For example, the outstanding graduates of our teacher education program might not choose to enter the vitally important teaching profession because of the challenge of repaying their student loans on the relatively low incomes of beginning teachers.

The data strongly suggest the impact and importance of the Pell program and other need-based programs in promoting student success at UNI. More compelling are the examples of talented people who are given an opportunity to earn a degree and eventually make significant contributions to the economic future of this country.

Let me introduce you to Ms. Danielle Stuck, who is a Pell Grant recipient. She is currently a junior at UNI working towards her psychology degree. She plans on either pursuing a clinical psychology degree or going to graduate school to become a college professor. It should be noted that she graduated from high school in Iowa, she is attending college in Iowa, and she intends to live in Iowa upon graduation. She is a first-generation college student with no parental guidance or support. College was clearly not a guarantee for her. She was able to attend college only because of the help of the Pell Grant and a few scholarships. She stated that this aid made a huge difference in her life. It opened doors that were inaccessible to her due to factors that were not in her control. She states, "To a young college student struggling to get by, the Federal Pell Grant is truly a blessing." She did not tell us this but we got permission to share that she was valedictorian of a class of 312 at Thomas Jefferson High School and she carries a perfect 4.0 grade point average at UNI as a member of the Honors Program. What a loss it would be for all of us not to have a student of her ability able to attend college.

We were very pleased to hear on February 1, that the Department of Education (ED) issued the Pell grant schedule indicating that for the academic year of 2011–2012 the maximum grant will be \$5,550. Senator Harkin, your leadership in securing the funding necessary to make that happen is greatly appreciated. The challenge now is to sustain that level.

Given the recent sharp increase in demand for Pell Grants and the implications for future funding, there are indications the new Congress may re-examine the Pell

Grant Program. I encourage you and your colleagues to avoid policies that would restrict student access by penalizing students, like Danielle Stuck, in their ability to pursue a legitimate course of study at an institution of higher education and, in the long-run, to make great contributions to the economy of the United States.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN COLLEGE AND LIFE

While financial aid is the largest single component of the Federal funding which UNI receives, other programs from ED provide funding which serves a critical role in enabling students to attain the skills and abilities to be ready for higher education, beginning with the early childhood years. I would like to highlight two areas: teacher education, with an emphasis on special education, and the TRIO programs.

Teacher education with emphasis on special education. As you know, UNI is the largest preparer of teachers in the State with more than 500 new teachers graduating each year, and UNI has provided a leadership role in addressing the shortage of teachers certified in special education. Federal grants continue to enable us to provide courses for teachers who are not certified, professional development for teachers in the field, and enrichment for our teacher education programs on campus.

Our work now by our federally funded Center on Literacy, Language, and Disability Studies in Early Childhood Education, in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education, has particular promise for the future of early childhood and early elementary school children with special needs. We are working with children and teachers in inclusive classrooms on new teaching methods to build literacy, language, and communication skills, which are the essential building blocks for all education. For too many years it has been assumed that special needs children could not attain literacy and communication skills. With innovations in technology and approaches that integrate sensory activities with traditional pedagogies, our work is demonstrating gains well beyond previous expectations. Our work has also extended to parents and family centered practices to foster and enhance learning. Exhibit 2 contains a statement by Emily Thatcher, Consultant, Bureau of Student and Family Support Services, Iowa Department of Education, which speaks to the impact of our work:

“In little more than 2 years of these projects, students with significant disabilities are demonstrating increased ability to communicate and grow in their literacy skills and challenge their teachers to provide greater levels of literacy instruction. As gains in literacy and communication skills are demonstrated, family involvement has increased and many are encouraged to consider educational outcomes not thought to be obtainable for their students.”

This is not the time to cut back on programs that hold such promise for our children. The economic payback of this investment in this cutting-edge, research-based education that prepares students to be contributing members of society is substantial.

TRIO Programs.—UNI places a high priority on providing a quality education to financially disadvantaged and minority students. Accordingly, UNI is proud to be partner with the Federal Government in providing the TRIO programs. Many students, particularly first generation, would never aspire to college or believe it was in the realm of possibility were it not for the TRIO programs. This past academic year, UNI served 3,385 individuals through its Educational Opportunity Center, Educational Talent Search, and Upward Bound programs. Two thirds of these students were low income and first generation. Nearly half were minority. These are the populations which form the base for America’s economic future. The TRIO programs have demonstrated success in reducing the achievement gap. These gains in achievement and productivity are critically important if the United States wants to regain its competitiveness in the global economy. Cutting back these programs will indirectly affect the long-term vitality of the economy. Now is not the time to reduce the funding for these programs.

Full recovery from the recession will require more people with more education. To be competitive and creative and entrepreneurial in the global business environment individuals need knowledge and skills appropriate for the 21st century in science, mathematics, and technology; in foreign language and cultural understanding; and in entrepreneurship and innovation. All of this requires the very best prepared teachers and an education system that serves all of our citizens from birth to death.

UNI can cite many individuals who were helped or are being helped by TRIO programs. Examples of success stories are provided in exhibit 3. I would like to highlight how the TRIO has helped one individual who is now helping the United States

advance in a critically important area for economic development—science education. Reygan Freeny, a former participant of the TRIO programs and a soon-to-be holder of a Ph.D. degree in chemistry from the University of Iowa, is an instructor in our department of chemistry and biochemistry. Ms. Freeny places an extraordinarily and well-deserved high value on the TRIO programs here at UNI.

“I was a low-income, African-American girl from a single parent household residing on the eastside of Waterloo, Iowa and labeled as a, ‘low-income, disadvantaged youth.’ This was my identifier before becoming a participant in the Classic Upward Bound (CUB) Program. The program leveled the educational and socioeconomic playing field for a poor girl whose mother only graduated from high school.

“The CUB program challenged me to become a scholar . . . and the Student Support Services (SSS) program fostered its growth while I attended college. The SSS program staff served as academic advisors, confidants, and (at times) a surrogate mother because my family did not understand many of the issues I faced as a college student.

“I think about these programs and the impact on my life and how my mother and I sat in an office filing out the FAFSA Federal Student Aid form and she had never planted a foot in a university office before this meeting. I have finished all the requirements for my Ph.D. in chemistry and will be defending my dissertation related to nanoscience shortly. I believe I was worth the investment of the TRIO programs; it provided me with awareness and empowerment that a lonely child growing up on the wrong side of the tracks did not have access to. Statistically speaking, I should not be where I am today. TRIO has equipped me with the tools for being a change agent and an investment in America’s future.”

This statement by Ms. Freeny identifies the profound effect the TRIO programs have on the individual. One could argue that these programs effectively end the poverty cycle in many families, as well as add to the workforce highly educated individuals.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

We are right to talk about education and economic development, but we should also be talking about the values of this Nation. Offering every young man and woman, and indeed displaced adults, the opportunity to obtain the knowledge and tools needed for a successful productive life is the right thing to do. Here at UNI, and I would argue that at all institutions of higher learning, we strive to make every student achieve the best education possible for them. To make that happen, those students first have to recognize that the opportunity exists for them to get a degree. Those students have to be prepared properly for college. The TRIO programs address both of those issues. And, of course, those students have to be able to afford to attend a college or university. Pell grants, scholarships provided by the universities and others, and reasonable tuition levels address the issue of affordability. We know that currently we are helping many, but certainly not all. We are not doing enough—to start doing less would be wrong. I want to extend our deep appreciation to you, Senator Harkin, for your outstanding leadership and commitment to programs in education, health, human services, and the workforce. We must not let these programs erode.

Thank you very much. I would be pleased to respond to questions.

EXHIBIT 1.—UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ANNUAL REPORT—2009–2010

Notable change	2008–2009			2009–2010			Percent change			
	Number of awards	Value of awards	Mean award	Number of awards	Value of awards	Mean award	Number of awards	Value of awards		
Student Financial Aid Programs										
Total	37,136	\$124,372,381	\$3,349	38,145	\$128,829,476	\$3,377	38,145	\$128,829,476	2.7	3.6
Institutional and Private Gift Aid	9,005	\$19,085,997	\$2,119	9,702	\$19,984,057	\$2,060	9,702	\$19,984,057	7.7	4.76
Institutional Scholarships/Grants	5,607	\$10,422,989	\$1,859	6,968	\$12,017,114	\$1,725	6,968	\$12,017,114	24.3	15.3
Corporate/Private Scholarships	3,015	\$5,590,579	\$1,854	2,342	\$4,898,775	\$2,092	2,342	\$4,898,775	-22.3	-12.4
Athletic Scholarships	383	\$3,072,429	\$8,022	392	\$3,068,168	\$7,827	392	\$3,068,168	2.3	-0.1
Federal and State Grants	5,535	\$13,320,398	\$2,407	6,405	\$16,776,728	\$2,619	6,405	\$16,776,728	15.7	25.9
Federal Pell Grant ¹	2,567	\$7,642,360	\$2,977	3,309	\$10,882,051	\$3,289	3,309	\$10,882,051	28.9	42.4
Academic Competitiveness Grant ¹	560	\$474,480	\$847	608	\$491,527	\$808	608	\$491,527	8.6	3.6
National SMART Grant ¹	107	\$318,579	\$2,977	187	\$573,673	\$3,068	187	\$573,673	74.8	80.1
Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant ¹	550	\$545,556	\$992	590	\$556,989	\$944	590	\$556,989	7.3	2.1
TEACH Grant ¹	168	\$606,307	\$3,609	314	\$1,205,082	\$3,838	314	\$1,205,082	86.9	98.8
ROTC ¹	17	\$111,631	\$6,567	8	\$62,471	\$7,809	8	\$62,471	-52.9	-44
Other Federal Grant/Scholarship Programs ¹	490	\$1,393,872	\$2,845	439	\$888,018	\$2,251	439	\$888,018	-10.4	-29.1
All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship	87	\$502,028	\$5,770	55	\$295,792	\$5,378	55	\$295,792	-36.8	-41.1
IMAGES Grant	182	\$337,700	\$1,855	204	\$332,200	\$1,628	204	\$332,200	12.1	-1.6
Iowa Grant	207	\$169,866	\$821	191	\$161,830	\$847	191	\$161,830	-7.7	-4.7
Vocational Rehabilitation	166	\$453,441	\$2,732	179	\$523,610	\$2,925	179	\$523,610	7.8	15.5
Commission for the Blind	3	\$10,821	\$3,607	2	\$11,163	\$5,582	2	\$11,163	-33.3	3.2
Other State Grants	335	\$290,121	\$866	223	\$286,548	\$1,285	223	\$286,548	-33.4	-1.2
National Guard	96	\$463,656	\$1,855	96	\$405,774	\$4,227	96	\$405,774	-12.5	-12.5
Loans	17,396	\$80,741,386	\$4,641	17,273	\$80,608,345	\$4,667	17,273	\$80,608,345	-0.7	-0.2
State Loans	451	\$803,701	\$1,782	511	\$845,398	\$1,654	511	\$845,398	13.3	5.2
Federal Perkins ¹	15,751	\$72,515,429	\$4,604	16,118	\$75,876,571	\$4,708	16,118	\$75,876,571	2.3	4.6
Private Loans	1,194	\$7,422,256	\$6,216	644	\$3,886,376	\$6,035	644	\$3,886,376	-46.1	-47.6
Employment	5,200	\$11,224,600	\$2,159	4,765	\$11,460,436	\$2,405	4,765	\$11,460,436	-8.4	2.1
Federal Work-Study ¹	515	\$678,925	\$1,318	512	\$769,415	\$1,503	512	\$769,415	-0.6	13.3
Iowa Work-Study	77	\$101,354	\$1,316	362	\$2,263,481	\$6,253	362	\$2,263,481	-100	-100
Graduate Teaching, Research Assistantships	380	\$2,320,737	\$6,107	389	\$8,427,450	\$21,666	389	\$8,427,450	-4.7	-2.5
UNI Employment	4,228	\$8,123,584	\$1,921	3,891	\$8,427,450	\$21,666	3,891	\$8,427,450	-8	3.7

¹ Federal programs.

EXHIBIT 2

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EMILY THATCHER

“LITERACY FOR ALL”—STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

The Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Student and Family Support Services has established two innovative 5-year projects to increase the communicative and literate lives of students with significant disabilities. These projects, Literacy, Language, and Communication for Students with Significant Developmental Disabilities: Reaching Potential through Systemic and Sustainable Statewide Professional Development and Comprehensive Communication and Literacy Project are designed to include collaborative partnerships spanning Higher Institutes of Education, Area Education Agency and Local school district personnel. Faculty of the University of Northern Iowa in the Center for Disabilities in Literacy, Language, and Learning and Dr. Karen Erickson, of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill Department of Allied Health Sciences, Center for Literacy and Disabilities Studies are collectively sharing their expertise to support 25 classroom sites across the state of Iowa.

The reasons and purposes for supporting literacy and communication instruction for students with significant disabilities are grounded in the belief and knowledge that all students regardless of the level or nature of their disability have the potential to become literate adults when given the opportunity to be engaged in comprehensive literacy instruction. Research also supports the level of literacy to greatly impact the quality of life for individuals that includes employability, health, and civic engagement—all of which are valued and desired for students who face great obstacles in becoming independent within these activities.

In little more than 2 years of these projects, students with significant disabilities are demonstrating increased ability to communicate and grow in their literacy skills and challenge their teachers to provide greater levels of literacy instruction. As gains in literacy and communication skills are demonstrated, family involvement has increased and many are encouraged to consider educational outcomes not thought to be obtainable for their students.

Through support of these projects and belief of Literacy for All, the Iowa Department of Education is committed to eliminate the achievement gap and provide greater educational opportunity in literacy instruction that will lead to meaningful life outcomes for students with significant disabilities.

EXHIBIT 3

STATEMENTS FROM INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCE

TRIO PROGRAMS

Reygan Freaney

According to Charles Darwin, “If the misery of the poor be caused not by the laws of nature, but by our institutions, great is our sin.” This is why the Federal TRIO programs are of such importance. I was a low-income, African-American girl from a single parent household residing on the eastside of Waterloo, Iowa and labeled as a, “low-income, disadvantaged youth.” This was my identifier before becoming a participant in the Classic Upward Bound Program (CUB). The Upward Bound program has had substantial influence on my life in immeasurable ways. The program leveled the educational and socioeconomic playing field for a poor girl whose mother only graduated from high school.

The Classic Upward Bound Program challenged me to become a scholar. Initially, the program made a connection with me that eventually lead to a difference within me. It planted and nurtured the seed of a quality education and the Student Support Services (SSS) program fostered its growth while I attended college. I was the first person in my entire family to attend and graduate college. The SSS program staff served as academic advisors, confidants, and (at times) a surrogate mother because my family did not understand many of the issues I faced as a college student.

TRIO programs encouraged to me to become a productive citizen who is a valuable contributor to society. I think about these programs and the impact on my life and how my mother and I sat in an office filing out the FAFSA Federal Student Aid form and she had never planted a foot in a university office before this meeting. I have finished all the requirements for my Ph.D. in chemistry and will be defending my dissertation related to nanoscience shortly. I believe I was worth the investment of the TRIO programs; it provided me with awareness and empowerment that a lonely child going up on the wrong side of the track did not have access to. Statis-

tically speaking, I should not be where I am today but I currently teach chemistry at the University of Northern Iowa. TRIO has equipped me with the tools of being a change agent and it an investment in America's future.

* * * * *

To Whom It May Concern: What does Upward Bound mean to me? I Joined Upward Bound as a sophomore in high school because my best friend was in the program. I entered the program with no job, no money, and the usual "I know it all" attitude of a 16 year-old, but I left with so much more.

I think all teenagers feel like something is missing in their lives. We're trapped in a mental purgatory between childhood and adulthood, seeking something for ourselves, searching for our potential and the kind of adults we wish to become.

We enter into high school hoping we'll find what we are looking for. We join sports, music, drama, and unfortunately sometimes we turn to drugs or gangs. But we're all looking for our niche, somewhere that we will belong.

I think that some of the problem is that although we have a school full of people trying to prepare us for our adulthood and our future, they simply can't do everything for all of their students which we might need. TRIO Programs were able to provide mentors for me, people who were in places that seem intangible to most students who aren't in the program. We got a glimpse of what our futures could hold for us and we were shown that there were people who went through the same things that we did, and made it. Upward Bound showed us that we all had this potential, the abilities to succeed as well. This is something that only they could have provided us, and something that was invaluable to my success and undoubtedly the others around us.

Upward Bound provides us a place where friendships can be fostered with peers who also value their education and the opportunities that it will provide. Not only that, but they provide it for those who need it the most—those who often aren't able to have their parents around them enough to mentor them because they might be working two jobs to support their family. Tutorials give us a safe and stress-free environment that we can escape to for a couple of hours to study, and the tutors are people that are often going to college who can be related to and looked up to as a role model and someone that we can gain advice from. Best of all, it was free.

Growing up, I always thought I knew everything because I was intelligent, but my senior year of high school hit me hard. For once in my life, I didn't know what I was doing or where I wanted to go in life. Upward Bound helped me figure out that a 4-year university was the best place for me to go, but that presented a new problem. My parents aren't able to work much since they're both disabled, and I couldn't find a job at all. How would we be able to pay for even one year of college, let alone four and which one would I pick?

Upward Bound helped me figure that out too. They helped me find and apply to scholarships, took me on college tours, and helped me fill out my FAFSA, which I hadn't even heard of up until that point. They paid for my application fees, which I certainly wouldn't have been able to do, and I now had valuable references that could write me letters of recommendation from the program. They motivated me, supported me, and wouldn't accept anything short of excellence.

Upward Bound wasn't just a program that helped me graduate from high school and move on to college. It was a program that actually cared about me and asked for nothing in return, which is something that you don't encounter very often anymore. Upward bound showed me that doing the bare minimum wasn't acceptable—I had to exceed even my own standards. So when I was asked to write this, there really wasn't even a choice for me to make. How could I not, when Upward Bound taught me how to excel in my education, and to accept no one's limitations for my achievement?

Upward Bound was my teacher, my mentor, my counselor, my friend, and my parent all rolled up in one, and Upward Bound showed me how to not only be a student, but a resilient woman who will never let anyone tell her she can't do or be something ever again. That is what Upward Bound means to me.

Thank you.

KRYSTAL M. ROBINSON,
Freshman at the University of Northern Iowa.

* * * * *

Hello my name is Azline Nelson.

I started the TRIO programs when I was a sixth grader and have been an active participant since that time. I have been an active member in talent search, the Classic Upward Bound program and this past summer I served as a Tutor-Mentor for the classic upward program.

During high school I was active in the academic year by participating in tutorials and during the summer I was a scholar in the summer enrichment Classic Upward Bound program. Without both programs to prepare me for life, I do not how I would have been successful in any of my endeavors. These programs taught me the importance of time management, effective communication, how to seek resources, networking and how to follow up once you have interacted with someone and most importantly pointed me in the right direction to receive my fantastic scholarship.

I am in recognition of the Gates Millennium Scholarship and I would not be able to say that without the aid of TRIO programs. They have groomed me for success better than any program that I have ever been a part of. They have encouraged me to stay active with community service, active on campus and helped to enroll me in leadership training to develop my interpersonal skills. This program has helped tremendously to make me the excellent scholar that I am today.

I am a sophomore at Spelman College on the Dean's List with a grade point average of 3.7. I currently serve as the Educational Advancement Foundation Chair for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated and I am the treasury of Toastmaster International. Without TRIO programs I would not be able to claim recognition to any of the accomplishments listed above.

The faculties hired for TRIO programs truly care about the best interests of the students are they are there to encourage and provide scholars with the necessary skills to become successful in life. They possibilities are endless with the aid of TRIO programs and they deserve to be the premier programs that students have access to. They provide all the necessary resources to take scholars anywhere they aspire. Please keep funding for all TRIO programs to help ensure the success of more students and produce more individuals similar to me.

* * * * *

UNI CLASSIC UPWARD BOUND

UNI Classic Upward Bound (CUB) is an essential entity to the community it serves, not only does this program develop collaborative relationships among members of the community it services, but it also provides great opportunities for many. CUB is designed to improve the life of the target population (low-income and first-generation students) by allowing them to maintain valuable life skills in the areas of, but not limited to networking, academics, and community service opportunities. This program is essential to the advancement of the many students it serves; CUB is one of the few positive outlets for children, especially low-income and first-generation students, in Black Hawk County. CUB is committed to building long-lasting relationship with the students; this does not only serve a valuable purpose in their immediate lives, but also in their future endeavors.

Neither of my parents went to college, my father did not have the opportunity of graduating high school. Yet they instilled in me the importance of going to college and getting a good education so that I would not have to work hard and live paycheck to paycheck as they did. Although they wanted the best for me they did not know how to ensure that I obtained the necessary tools to be successful, I did not either, lucky for me there was a group of committed people who reached out to me and gave me what my parents could not provide. I was first enrolled in the CUB program after the completion of my eighth grade year in the summer of 1999, as a student transitioning into high school. I stayed in contact with the wonderful Director Wilfred M. Johnson over the years, even while obtaining my BA from the University of Iowa. As of December 2010, I returned to the Waterloo area where I currently work as a tutor/mentor for the program. I am taking this moment to give to others what was given to me in hopes of inspiring them and giving them the motivation that I had to be the successful young woman that I am today.

The program continues to teach me beneficial concepts, while I was in the program I learned things such as how to enhance my academic skills and peer relationships, now as a post-program participator and tutor/mentor I am learning how to be a positive influence to the younger generation. I am also learning how to break the ice with what we call "little people" and also how to make learning interesting so they actually absorb the information that is given to them. With these students (low-income or first-generation) their parents are usually working and do not have the time and/or knowledge to ensure that their homework is not only getting done and turned in, but that they understand the concepts of their academic work. CUB provides great academic support and is a positive force within the community.

Sincerely,

KEYAH LEVY.

* * * * *

JANUARY 31, 2011.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: I am writing this letter to express concern for the Classic Upward Bound (CUB) Program at the University of Northern Iowa. I was exposed in the CUB program for the first time, in the summer of 1995. A friend of mine mentioned it to me, as she knew some people in the program, and we did not know the program specifics, but we did know that it was a program we wanted to be in! We would get to spend the summers on UNI's campus away from our parents, and we would get a weekly stipend. We did not know anything else that we would have to do, but we were sold.

It was during the 1995–1996 academic school year that I applied for and was accepted to the program, and regardless of my motivation for enrolling, the program has had a profound impact on my life. From the first time that I met the program director, Mickye Johnson, I knew that he would change me, and help mold me into a more productive member of society. My first summer in the program was the first time I had ever been away from home for so long, but it was such a wonderful opportunity for growth for me. Not only was I challenged academically, but I was also challenged to grow personally, and molded into a person who aspired to not only understand what was going on around me, but to impact that. I started my high school “career” a step ahead because now I knew some people that would attend Waterloo East High School with me that I had not previously known, and I had an academic advantage as I had already been exposed to some of the course material during the summer instructional program.

That was one of my first experiences with the CUB program, but it had such a long lasting impact on my life. I still look to the staff of the program for inspiration and mentorship in my professional life. I am currently employed by Hawkeye Community College as an Academic/Career Advising Coordinator. A position that I know was motivated by my early exposure to college through the Classic Upward Bound Program. At that time, I was sure I was going to go to medical school and become a doctor. At some point, my desire to help others in a medical capacity changed, and I knew my passion for education and helping others reach their educational goals would be my life passion.

I am a true testament of what the Classic Upward Bound program can do to help a student reach their educational potential. I come from a single-parent, low-income, first generation home. My mother raised four children by herself while working a full-time job, and we were involved with the CUB program, and have had some experience with college. I hold a bachelor's degree in psychology, and a master's degree in social work, and am in the process of pursuing a Ph.D. in educational leadership, my younger siblings are all currently enrolled in educational programs. My younger brother is pursuing an AAS in Automotive Technology, my youngest brother a BA in business from the University of Northern Iowa, and my sister is currently enrolled in medical school at the University of North Carolina. My mother instilled in us all a respect for education, and expected that we would all attend college, but the Classic Upward Bound program showed us that going to college could be a reality, and helped us to make those dreams a reality. It was that we would need financial support in order to attend college. They helped us to search and apply for scholarships, and to fill out the FAFSA which my mother still, after all these years, still likes a little assistance to fill out.

Through the Classic Upward Bound program, I was also exposed to educational opportunities offered by other TRIO programs. I was a participant in the Educational Talent Search program, and exposed some of my friends who could not get into the CUB program to opportunities available through this program. I was also a summer participant in the Math/Science Upward Bound program, which was yet another growth opportunity given to me by the program as I left the Waterloo/Cedar Falls area, and my comfort zone. Once I graduated from college, during my bridge year, I was connected to the Student Support Services program, and the Educational Opportunity Center, which helped ease my transition from high school to college. These programs were able to provide me support and opportunities for growth during my college years, but the support that I received from the programs did not stop once I obtained my BA. I also was allowed to do a practicum for my Master's program with the CUB program, which exposed me to a lot of the background information that as a participant you may not understand, and also, I believe, helped me to get my first full-time job. The first career opportunity that I was offered upon graduation was with the Student Support Services at Hawkeye Community College. I know that my first-hand experience with the program, as well as the grooming that I received during my practicum contributed to this opportunity.

The Classic Upward Bound program at the University of Northern Iowa has had a PROFOUND impact on my life. I fully support this program, and pray that students are offered the opportunities and experiences that I was exposed to for years

to come. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and thanking you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

LEAH CLARK, LMSW.

* * * * *
 My name is Robert Abben. I have been a part of the Classic Upward Bound Program for a total of ten years now. When I heard that funding for the program was going to be cut, I felt the need as a future educator to do my part to ensure that the program remains in place. This is necessary because countless individuals deserve the same opportunity that the program provided me 4 short years ago.

The Program has been so beneficial to me that it troubles me to know where to begin to tell the story of how the program has influenced me. The truth is I feel now that the program played a great role in making me the person that I am today. I entered the program the spring semester of my freshman year of high school in 2001 as a first generation college student. I came in just like every other student. I was young, immature, smart-mouthed, and thought I owned the world. Soon after I entered the program, Mr. Johnson cracked his whip. Some may be wondering exactly what whip I am referring to and that whip is the one that turns more than 80 percent of those smart-mouthed, know-it-all students into young, college educated adults. Over the years, as we have grown up, some of us have gone into business, counseling, other of us like myself, have gone on to become educators. We will be taking what Upward Bound has instilled in us and pass it on for generations to come in our classrooms throughout the United States. Other participants have even gone on to work in the White House.

Without this program, many of us would have never thought twice about a college education. The truth of it is, ask any educator and they will tell you, parental involvement is lacking in today's society. Many parents or guardians are not actively involved in their child's education. This may not be their intent but they may not have a choice. They may have to work two jobs so that their child can eat. Unfortunately, food tends to come before education. The Upward Bound Program is exactly what students in these types of situations need. Mr Johnson, in some respects, help raised me and with the help of my parents and all of the rest of the Upward Bound staff, I am where I am today. We can not take this away from future generations. If students with so much potential are allowed to slip through the cracks in the education system and do not have the support of the program, we as educators would be doing our students and society a disservice. The next doctor or Johnny Cockerin could be passed by because they did not believe they were smart enough or financially able to attend college. Upward Bound may be the only thing telling them otherwise.

Sure, if some students are asked what they think of the program, they may say it is terrible. There are so many rules, we can not have any fun. Also, it is so hot in those dorms. Who wants to go to school in the summertime? I will be the first to say I thought the same thing when I was younger. However, this really is one of those times when individuals do not realize what a great resource they have in front of them until it is gone. So please take my advice as a former student and future educator and please do not take the only chance at an education that some of our future students may have away from them.

* * * * *
 TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: I am writing this letter on behalf of the esteemed "Upward Bound" program. Created in 1968, Upward Bound is a vessel used to fight the "war on poverty." Since inception this program has helped thousands of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including myself. Having a father who dropped out of school in tenth grade and a mother who obtained only a high school diploma, college was not the topic of discussion within my household. My parents were more concerned or worried about paying bills.

Shocking as it may seem, UNI's Upward Bound program introduced the option of college to me for the first time. The tutorial programs they host gave me structure and provided help with challenging subjects, which allowed me to keep a high grade point average. The summer program was the highlight of my experience; although strict and homework ridden, the college classes we attended was great preparation for attending a university, such as UNI. Because of Upward Bound and the mentorship of Wilfred "Mickye" Johnson, last May I graduated from UNI with a 3.4 grade point average. I am currently headed into my second year of graduate school here at UNI, and teaching oral communication to undergraduate students.

Without the opportunity of the Upward Bound program, I'm sure this story would have ended differently. The opportunity this program afforded me has more reward-

ing benefits than just educational. I am the first person in my family to graduate from college. As I will soon start my doctoral program, my children are being challenged to further their education. I am also in the process of buying my first home a feat my mother or father never achieved. For this I am forever indebted to this program. In conclusion, I would like to thank Wilfred "Micky" Johnson, Upward Bound (TRIO), and the University of Northern Iowa for providing me and many others with an opportunity at success.

Sincerely,

SHERMAN WISE.

* * * * *

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: I am a proud mother of three. I am a lower middle class citizen and my son is a high school graduate and the first generation to go to college.

My son was in the Upward Bound Program. I believe my son wouldn't be where he is today without having the opportunity to be a part of this program. The program has taught him to be a leader in his personal growth and commitment to excellence. The tutorials helped him stay focused and the summer program gave him the taste of college life, which helped motivate him to go to college. Also the program is very informative and helpful when filling out scholarships, etc. Without this guidance, my son would not of had the recourses available for him to afford to go to college and further his education.

Where would my son be without the TRIO program? Answer. NOT as far as he is today.

The TRIO Program is a major asset to our society and economy as a whole. Without the commitment and recourses I believe some kids get lost in the shuffle. The children of today are "the future" and we must empower them to do so.

Thank you for your time,

TERESA LULOFF.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you, but before we go further, I understand I missed a couple of people here. I may have missed some others. State Representative Anesa Kajtazovic is here. Yes, welcome. Thank you. A newly elected State representative.

And State Representative Deb Berry is also here. Thank you for being here, both of you, today.

If I missed anyone, would you please let my staff know—I have got staff back there—so I can properly recognize you.

Senator Dotzler, welcome. You hold very important positions in the State legislature regarding the very issues we are talking about. So, again, thank you for that leadership, and welcome here. And please proceed.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM DOTZLER, IOWA STATE SENATOR, 11th DISTRICT

Mr. DOTZLER. Well, thank you, Senator Harkin, for this opportunity to speak to you today on Federal issues that have a direct effect on Iowa and its citizens.

As chair of the Senate Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee, I have the opportunity to hear from many of Iowa's top CEOs, and their message is clear and consistent. Iowa's economy is shifting farther away from private sector jobs requiring low skills to a highly specialized, innovation-based economy that requires advanced skills and competencies.

A recent report from ACT predicts that in 3 short years, nearly 45 percent of all jobs will require at least middle skills, which is additional training, but not necessarily a 4-year degree. Unfortunately, only 25 percent will have those skills needed.

Iowa lost approximately 55,000 jobs during this recession, of which 37,000 came from the manufacturing sector. These individuals have been identified as needing significant skill upgrades and

retraining to secure self-sustaining employment for the years to come.

Although Iowa's current unemployment rate is lower than the national average at 6.3 percent, the data for these unemployed workers points to significant challenges. Fourteen percent of the customers coming into Iowa Workforce Development offices do not have a GED. Fifty-seven percent are male, reflective of the significant job loss in manufacturing and construction.

Fourteen percent are older than the age of 55 years. Only 7 percent have a college degree. Eighty-seven percent have qualified for adult services, and 29 percent qualify for dislocated worker services.

If we are to be successful in moving workers from unemployment to work, enhanced services are clearly needed, and increased funding is crucial. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) provides opportunities for Iowa's disadvantaged youth, adults, and dislocated workers for retraining and enhanced worker services.

Iowa integrates its efforts with other programs and services at its One-Stop centers to greatly increase the number of individuals served in adult and dislocated worker programs. For Iowa's 2010 budget year, wage record data for adults exiting the program indicates that for each \$1 of WIA resources spent, there is an increase of \$77.59 in participant earnings for the next 12 months after completing services. For youth, it was \$2.25 per \$1 spent. And for the dislocated worker population, participant earnings were \$11.44 for each \$1 invested.

Senator Harkin, WIA efforts clearly have positive results, but Federal funding levels are too low to meet the need. Many unemployed workers are on a waiting list for WIA funded training opportunities. And on a statewide average, a year's training allocation lasts only a little more than 6 months. When larger mass layoffs occur, the State must rely on the national emergency grants to meet the needs of workers, all of which results in longer periods of unemployment before services are delivered.

And often, workers run out of benefits before training dollars become available, creating a new set of barriers for the worker to overcome. We are working with local employers and our community college to develop State short-term certified training programs to deliver skills in demand to unemployed and underemployed workers.

A pilot program at Kirkwood Community College has already helped 350 workers complete certificate programs and fill jobs with those needed skills at an average cost of only \$1,000 per student. Timely and adequate WIA funding can remove barriers that prevent struggling Iowans from helping themselves and, at the same time, help many Iowa businesses fill their need for skilled workers that is currently preventing them from expanding.

I recently had the opportunity to speak with an unemployed mother, Donnie Stanley, who entered Kirkwood's pilot program. Three months later, she was a certified nurse assistant. She now works full time and supports her family and plans to keep upgrading her skills. Donnie's success story is what the act is all about. Investment in our workforce equals quality employment.

Senator Harkin, in my remaining few minutes, I would like to speak briefly about the importance of maintaining and continuing to improve the Affordable Health Act. After hearing from hundreds of Iowans and business owners, it is clear to me that any successful attempt to nullify health reform would be a major blow to our State. We cannot afford to eliminate the tax credits that are helping to make health insurance more affordable for small businesses, and in recent surveys that I and my fellow senators have sent out, employers identified healthcare costs as a major limiting factor in job growth.

As a result, we have proposed to add an additional 25 percent State tax credit to the Federal credits that are already helping to make it more affordable for small business to provide insurance for new and existing employees. The Affordable Care Act plays an important role for families' financial security and removes the fear of insurance companies raising premiums by double digits with no recourse or accountability.

A personal friend of mine who is on a limited income had her rates increase 24 percent last year alone. Importantly, it provides workers with the freedom to change their job without losing coverage.

Last fall, my brother-in-law was laid off from his job through no fault of his own and couldn't afford to continue his insurance. He found work with a new employer, and while waiting for his probationary period to end and his new insurance to take effect, he had a heart attack. His hospital bill is now close to \$100,000.

To make things worse, he was then financially forced to wait for his insurance to take effect with his new employer before having a second procedure. Luckily, his lack of insurance didn't cost him his life.

Finally, Senator, I believe that the competitive bidding process for durable medical equipment could result in rural Iowans having less access to critical supplies of much-needed equipment like oxygen tanks. I would like to give you several examples, but time does not permit. And I would recommend that this be reviewed for possible rural exemptions.

I thank you for your willingness to hear from Iowans on these critical issues and thank you for your service to this great State of Iowa and this country.

Senator HARKIN. Well, thank you very much, Senator Dotzler. Thanks for great testimony. Appreciate it very much.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM DOTZLER

I thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today on Federal issues that have a direct effect on Iowa and its citizens.

As Chair of the Senate Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee, I have the opportunity to hear from many of Iowa's top CEOs and their message is clear and consistent.

Iowa's economy is shifting farther away from private sector jobs requiring low skills to an often highly specialized innovation-based economy that requires advanced skills and competencies.

A recent report from ACT predicts that in 3 short years nearly 45 percent of all jobs will require "middle skills" which is additional training, but not necessarily a 4-year degree. Unfortunately, only 25 percent will have the skills needed.

Iowa lost approximately 55,000 jobs during this recession, of which 37,000 came from the manufacturing sector. These individuals have been identified as needing

significant skill upgrades and retraining to secure self-sustaining employment for the years to come.

Although Iowa's current unemployment rate is lower than the national average at 6.3 percent, the data for these unemployed workers points to significant challenges as follows:

- 14 percent of the customers coming into the IWD offices do not have a GED;
- 57 percent are male, reflective of the significant job loss in manufacturing and construction;
- 14 percent are older than 55 years of age;
- Only 7 percent have a college degree;
- 87 percent have qualified for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) adult services; and
- 29 percent qualify for WIA dislocated worker services.

If we are to be successful in moving workers from unemployment to work, enhanced services are clearly needed and increased funding is crucial.

The WIA provides opportunities for Iowa's disadvantaged adults, youth, and dislocated workers for retraining and enhanced worker services.

Iowa integrates its efforts with other programs and services at its one stop centers to greatly increase the number of individuals served in adult and dislocated worker programs.

For Iowa's 2010 budget year, wage record data for adults exiting the program indicates that for each \$1 of WIA resources spent there was an increase of \$77.59 in participant earnings over the next 12 months after completion of services.

For youth, it was \$2.25 for \$1 spent. And, for the dislocated worker population, participant earnings were \$11.44 per \$1 invested.

Senator Harkin, WIA efforts clearly have positive results. But Federal funding levels are too low to meet the need.

Many unemployed workers are on a waiting list for WIA-funded training opportunities. On a statewide average, a year's training allocation lasts only a little over 6 months.

When larger mass layoffs occur, the State must rely on National Emergency Grants to meet the needs of workers, all of which results in longer periods of unemployment before services are delivered.

Often workers run out of benefits before training dollars become available creating a new set of barriers for the worker to overcome.

We are working with local employers and our community colleges to develop statewide short-term certified training programs to deliver skills in demand to unemployed and underemployed workers.

A pilot program at Kirkwood Community College has already helped 350 Iowa workers complete certificate programs and fill jobs with those needed skills, all at an average cost of only \$1,000 per student.

Timely and adequate WIA funding can remove barriers that prevent struggling Iowan's from helping themselves and at the same time help many Iowa businesses fill their need for skilled workers that is currently preventing them from expanding.

I recently had the opportunity to speak with an unemployed mother, Donnie Stanley, who entered Kirkwood's pilot program. Three months later she was a certified nursing assistant. She now works full-time, supports her family and plans to keep upgrading her skills.

Donnie's success story is what the act is about. Investment in Our Workforce equals quality employment.

Senator Harkin, in my remaining few minutes, I would like to speak briefly about the importance of maintaining and continuing to improve The Affordable Health Care Act.

After hearing from hundreds of Iowans and business owners, it is clear to me that any successful attempt to nullify health reform would be a major blow to our State.

We cannot afford to eliminate the tax credits that are helping to make health insurance more affordable for small businesses.

In recent surveys that I and my fellow Senators have sent out, employers have identified healthcare costs as a major limiting factor in job growth.

As a result, we have proposed to add an additional 25 percent State tax credit to the Federal credits that are already helping to make it more affordable for small businesses to provide insurance for new and existing employees.

The Affordable Care Act plays an important role for families' financial security and removes the fear of insurance companies raising premiums by double digits with no recourse or accountability.

A personal friend of mine who is on a limited income had her rates increased by 24 percent last year alone.

Importantly, it provides workers the freedom to change their job without losing coverage.

Last fall my brother-in-law was laid off from his job and couldn't afford to continue his insurance. He found work with a new employer and while waiting for his probationary period to end and his new insurance to take effect, he had a heart attack. His hospital bill is now close to \$100,000.

He was then financially forced to wait for his insurance to take effect before having a second procedure. Luckily his lack of insurance didn't cost him his life.

Finally Senator, I believe the competitive bidding process for durable medical equipment could result in rural Iowan's having less access to critical supplies of much needed equipment like oxygen tanks.

I would like to give you several examples, but time does not permit. I recommend that this be reviewed for a possible rural exemption.

I thank you for your willingness to hear from Iowan's on these critical issues and thank you for your service to this great State of Iowa.

Senator HARKIN. Now we will turn to Jerry Nelson, field office manager of the Social Security Administration.

Jerry, again, thanks for all your great work, and your testimony is part of the record. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF JERRY NELSON, FIELD OFFICE MANAGER, SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, WATERLOO, IOWA

Mr. NELSON. Great, thank you.

Chairman Harkin, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the importance of fully funding the administrative budget of Social Security.

I am Jerry Nelson. I have been a manager for 7 years here in Waterloo. I have 23 years of service with the Social Security Administration, and I am very fortunate to play a role in a program that has touched the lives of every American and is one of the most successful programs ever created.

The current economic downturn and the aging baby boomer population means that more Americans are turning to us than ever before. Fortunately, Congress has provided us with the resources needed to improve service to the American people, and we have made good use of those resources. Without a doubt, sustained, adequate, and timely funding for our agency makes a difference in the Americans' lives.

Let me illustrate this importance by just looking at a snapshot of my Waterloo servicing area. We serve 50,000 retired and disabled workers, their families, as well as survivors of deceased workers. We also serve 4,500 Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries. We receive an average of 480 visitors every week and answer 150 phone calls every day.

Like every other field office in the United States, we see the result of the current economy and the aging of our population on a daily basis. In my office, claims for Social Security and SSI have increased significantly over the last 2 years. Additional funding and expanded use of technology has helped us cope with the increase in these workloads.

We have been able to add two additional employees in the last 2 years. Additional staffing and information technology advances have helped us provide better service. Your constituents have a shorter waiting time in our office at this time than they did 2 years ago. We have been able to place more of an emphasis on answering the telephone.

Social Security employees are proud as far as how far we have come over the last 2 years, and we do not want to lose this momentum. Currently, Social Security is operating under a continuing resolution. As a result, the agency has implemented a hiring freeze, which is reversing the staffing gains that I mentioned.

This year, I have already lost one person to retirement that I cannot replace, and this will have an impact on the service we deliver. Nearly 20 percent of my staff is eligible to retire today, and every loss that I cannot replace will seriously damage our ability to take care of the people in our district.

I am hopeful the agency will not be forced to impose furlough days, which could bring dire consequences to the people we serve. One furlough day would translate into 100 visitors not seen, 40 claims and redeterminations not done, and 150 phone calls left unanswered.

As a result of the furlough, I believe we would see an increase in processing time for claims and other actions, including an increase in wait times. Your constituents would experience delays in scheduling appointments, getting benefit verifications, obtaining replacement Social Security cards.

Just 1 furlough day would be devastating to the claimant who may need a critical or immediate payment. We are asking America's most vulnerable citizens to wait an extra day or perhaps longer to get the service they so desperately need.

To better appreciate the vital services we provide, I need to look no further than a family that our office recently assisted. A social worker from the University of Iowa Hospital brought to our attention a mother and a new baby, explaining the mother didn't even have a coat or shoes for the cold weather. The situation looked so desperate that the nurses pooled together their own money to buy some clothes.

My staff immediately took an SSI application for this baby. Based on low birth weight, we will be able to pay benefits quickly. I am sure you can see why it is vitally important that we get this child into current pay status as soon as he is released from the hospital, and we will make sure that happens.

On behalf of that family and the thousands of others we serve, I thank you for your continued support. As a field office manager working on the front line in the State of Iowa, I am proud of the real and meaningful progress we have made over the last 2 years, and I am proud to testify of the personal commitment of the 24 employees in the Waterloo office, as they perform outstanding public service every day.

Thank you, sir.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Nelson. That is wonderful. Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JERRY NELSON

Chairman Harkin: Thank you for this opportunity to discuss the importance of fully funding Social Security's administrative budget for fiscal year 2011. I am Jerry Nelson, the manager of the Waterloo Social Security office, which is staffed by 24 committed and talented public servants. I feel very fortunate to play a role in administering one of the most successful Government programs ever created in our country and to work for an agency that touches the lives of nearly every American.

The recent economic downturn and the aging of the baby boomers have caused more Americans to turn to us more than ever before. In particular, claims for retirement and disability benefits have soared in the last few years. Fortunately, Congress has understood these challenges and provided us with the resources we needed to handle this surge in our work, which directly supports the national economy.

With the additional funding Congress provided over the last 3 years and significant increases in employee productivity, we have made tremendous progress to enhance service to the public, reduce the hearings backlog, complete hundreds of thousands more claims, and reduce the 1–800 number wait times and busy signals. Our accomplishments are particularly remarkable considering the continued rise in benefit applications and the furloughs of disability determination services (DDS) employees in many States. Fortunately, the Iowa furlough of DDS employees ended in June 2010, but these furloughs cost almost \$213,000 in administrative funding to the State of Iowa as of the end of calendar year 2010, with more than \$85,000 in delayed disability benefits.

Eliminating the hearings backlog continues to be our number one priority, and we have made progress in reducing both the number of pending hearings and the amount of time a claimant must wait for a hearing decision. We ended fiscal year 2010 with just more than 700,000 pending hearings nationwide—the lowest level in 5 years. At its peak, it took an average of 18 months for a hearing decision. As of January 2011, it took more than a year.

We have made significant improvements in other areas of responsibility as well. Even though our offices received a record number of new claims, our employees worked hard to keep the number of pending initial disability cases down. We ended fiscal year 2010 with initial disability claims pending at an all-time high of more than 842,000 cases. However, the additional funding we received from Congress helped us keep this number well below the 1 million cases that we previously projected for the end of fiscal year 2010. In the first 4 months of fiscal year 2011, we have already decreased the number of pending initial disability claims to 793,049. As importantly, the accuracy of the disability decisions made by our DDSs reached 98.1 percent in fiscal year 2010—the highest level in over a decade. Waiting times in our field offices dropped, and we achieved our best performance on our 1–800 number since we began collecting data nearly a decade ago.

These improvements are attributable to increased staffing in our offices across the country. We are grateful to Congress for enabling us to hire additional staff and for its continued support.

Claims for benefits are not the only workloads in our field offices. Each year we handle a large number of activities not directly related to claims for benefits. Nationwide, last year our field offices processed more than 18 million requests for new and replacement social security cards; we served thousands of people each day who needed to report changes of address, changes in direct deposit information, and other issues that could affect their benefit payments.

We also handle a number of workloads involving programs administered by other agencies. For example, field offices play a significant role in helping people with their Medicare benefits and often work with State and local agencies regarding Medicaid and SNAP (formerly known as food stamps). We work hard to be good stewards of the programs entrusted to us by ensuring that only eligible individuals receive benefits and that their benefits are in the correct amount. One way we do this is by conducting continuing disability reviews (CDRs) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) redeterminations. CDRs are reviews of disability beneficiaries' medical conditions and redeterminations are reviews of nonmedical factors of eligibility, such as income and resources. This very significant workload, in terms of both importance and effort, supports the President's multi-year plan to reduce improper payments.

The President's fiscal year 2011 budget includes \$38 million in additional resources for CDRs and SSI redeterminations. This fiscal year 2011 level represents a 5 percent increase more than the fiscal year 2010 level. We plan to conduct 360,000 full medical CDRs and 2,422,000 redeterminations. We estimate that every \$1 spent on medical CDRs yields at least \$10 in lifetime Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid savings, and every \$1 spent on SSI redeterminations yields more than \$8 in Social Security and Medicaid savings over 10 years. If we meet our fiscal year 2011 program integrity goals for medical CDRs and redeterminations, the estimated program savings over the 10-year period through fiscal year 2020 amount to more than \$7 billion, including savings to Medicare and Medicaid.

Let me illustrate the importance of this additional funding at the local level. The service area for my Waterloo, Iowa office covers more than 4,000 square miles; it is mainly farmland. We serve more than 50,000 retired and disabled workers and

their families, as well as survivors of deceased workers. We also serve more than 4,500 SSI recipients.

Like every other field office in the United States, we see daily the impact of the current economy and the aging of our population. In my office, initial claims for Social Security and SSI benefits increased significantly over the past few fiscal years.

With additional funds, we were able to add two new employees who have undoubtedly helped us provide better service. We receive an average of 480 visitors a week. People walking into our office without an appointment waited, on average, less than 9 minutes in fiscal year 2008; at the end of fiscal year 2010 they waited less than 7 minutes. Our wait times are far below the national average of about 21 minutes. We also take an average of 150 phone calls each day—and on very busy days we may answer upwards of 200 calls.

Our local hearing office in West Des Moines has also made great progress. At the end of fiscal year 2008, we had more than 4,000 pending hearings. As of December 2010, we reduced the number of pending hearings to 3,500 cases. At the same time, we cut the average time it takes to make a hearing decision from 539 days to 299 days—a nearly 45 percent reduction in waiting time.

We have worked hard to accomplish all of these gains. Our employees are proud of how far we have come over the last 2 years, and we do not want to lose our momentum. To help ensure that we can continue this significant progress, we urge Congress to act swiftly to enact the President's fiscal year 2011 budget. Currently, like the rest of the Government, we are operating under a continuing resolution. As a result, we had to implement a hiring freeze. The freeze affects us all; so far this year, one member of my staff has retired. I cannot replace him. This reduction in staffing will affect the way we serve the public.

I worry that the agency will be forced to impose furlough days if our budget is cut. Furloughs would be devastating to both the public that depends on us and to our employees. While a furlough would save the Government about \$5,600 per day in employee salaries at the Waterloo office, the human cost would far outweigh any savings. In my office, 1 furlough day would translate to 100 visitors not seen, 32 claims not taken, 150 phone calls unanswered, and 7 redeterminations not done. Extended to the national level, this would mean that about 182,000 daily visitors would not be seen, about 33,000 claims would not be taken, and almost 10,000 redeterminations would not be completed.

As people return to conduct business on days the office is open, walk-in office visitors would have longer waits to see a representative. Members of the public would also have to wait longer for scheduled appointments. Claims processing time would increase. A furlough day could be devastating to someone in a dire need situation desperate for a critical or immediate payment, or for a beneficiary needing verification information to qualify for food stamps, to obtain housing, or to get Medicaid.

We thank you for your continued support. With enactment of the President's 2011 budget, your oversight, and our hard work, I believe we can give the American public the level of service they expect and deserve. As a field office manager working on the front line in the State of Iowa, I am proud of the real and meaningful progress we have made in the last 3 years despite challenges presented by the economy, and I am proud to testify to the personal commitment of our employees as they go about our mission. Thank you.

Senator HARKIN. Now we will turn to Kim Young-Kent, executive director of Tri-County Child and Family.

STATEMENT OF KIM YOUNG-KENT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TRI-COUNTY CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, WATERLOO, IOWA

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Hello. Thank you, Senator, for giving me the opportunity to testify today.

In 1993, you were in town, and we had a very brief conversation, and it went like this. "Kim, what are you doing in order to expand the Head Start program?" And I said, "Well, I am working on infrastructure and capacity." And you said, "You better do more."

And so, in 1993, we were serving 360 children in a part-day, part-year program. Today, we are serving 568, and 312 in Early Head Start. So thank you for that challenge. I think we stepped up to the plate.

Senator HARKIN. Good for you.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. But I am still only serving 46 percent of the children eligible for services in Early Head Start. We have a current waiting list of 96 children waiting to get into services.

On behalf of my 1,600 colleagues running Head Start agencies across the country, we would like to respectfully request that Congress maintain the current investment in the expansion of Head Start and Early Head Start and include the ARRA funding that was provided for us so we can continue those expanded slots.

Locally, we were able to add 72 slots to Early Head Start services and added those services in both Buchanan and Grundy Counties where they previously did not have any.

In Iowa, 8,191 children and their families are funded to receive services in Head Start and Early Head Start. In 2010, we actually provided services to 9,246 children because we kept the doors open and fully enrolled every single day. More than 64 percent of our families served in the State of Iowa are working poor.

Since the 2007 reauthorization of Head Start, quality improvements have eagerly been embraced and are being implemented as quickly as possible. Services to homeless families have been enhanced, and last year in the State of Iowa, 49 percent of the homeless families served acquired housing.

We have also strengthened our partnerships with school districts and now serve most of the eligible 4-year-olds in our community in the neighborhood schools. This has enhanced the transition to school for our children, their parents, and our school district. Tri-County meets 100 percent of the teacher and assistant teacher and education coordinator requirements in the act, even though those requirements don't go into effect until 2013.

In Iowa, 77.5 percent of the classroom teachers and 80 percent of the assistant teachers meet that requirement now. Again, it doesn't go into effect until 2013.

Additionally, our school readiness statistics continue to increase every year as we work with our school districts to assure that Head Start enrolled children receive the comprehensive services, nutrition, health, including mental health, and family support services. When children are fed, they learn better. When children have dental needs addressed, they are able to focus on their learning.

Families are able to focus on getting their children to school on a regular basis when they know they are working with providers who treat them with the respect and dignity deserving of folks who love their children and are trying hard to provide for them in tough economic times.

Should the additional ARRA Head Start investment be cut, we would have to reduce not only the 72 slots that we added here, but possibly more to keep up with the increased costs associated with food, rent, and utilities. This would be devastating at a time when we have begun to make real gains.

And yet, we are not serving anywhere near the number of families that are eligible for and have need of these services. It is in that regard that we ask the subcommittee to maintain its investment in the expanded Head Start and Early Head Start programs so that we can continue to serve Iowa's vulnerable children and families.

We know what this request means in a time when we all must buckle down and do more with less. However, Head Start is a smart investment, one of the smartest and most effective we make. Study after study has demonstrated that Head Start has yielded a cost-benefit ratio of as large as 7-to-1.

It is also efficient. Compared with other early childhood programs that generate high results over investments, one Harvard economist calculated that Head Start provides 80 percent of the benefits of small program, early childhood programs—or small model early childhood programs at 60 percent of the cost. In other words, we are efficient.

We are very concerned that without adequate funding here at Tri-County, we will have to drop those families from our program and lay off dedicated employees, leaving children more vulnerable as their parents struggle to find affordable care when they are looking for work. The question is whether to best make the investment now or pay for it later?

Dr. James Heckman, a Nobel Laureate in economics at the University of Chicago, recommended to the National Committee on Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Reform Early Head Start and Head Start are programs on which to build and improve, not to cut. President Obama has made education an economic imperative and supports the idea that education starts at birth with families and community.

In Iowa, Head Start facilitates both, providing low-income families with the resources to find and sustain work, learn to be better parents, and feel able to leave their children in affordable and high-quality care. We ask the subcommittee to place a priority on comprehensive early childhood education and care through Head Start and Early Head Start, ensuring our children start school healthy and ready to learn.

The 1,041 children at Tri-County, the 7,146 additional children in Iowa, and the 991,000 children in the Nation are counting on you, sir. Thank you.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you very much, Kim. That is great. Eighteen years ago?

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. That is great. That is wonderful.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KIM YOUNG-KENT

Good morning, Mr. Chairman. My name is Kim Young-Kent and I am the director of Tri-County Child and Family Development Council in Waterloo, Iowa. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before the subcommittee today in support of fiscal year 2011 and 2012 funding for Head Start. In 1993, I met you at a local event honoring you for your work on behalf of children. You asked me if I was expanding the Head Start program locally and I told you we were working on infrastructure and internal capacity. You said “Kim, get ready, you have to move when you can and you can’t afford to be left behind”. In 1993 we were serving 360 children in part-day, part-year programming. Today we are funded to serve 880 children, 568 in Head Start and we are the largest provider of Early Head Start services in the State of Iowa, serving 312 infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Thank you for the challenge; we responded.

On behalf of my 1,600 colleagues running Head Start agencies across the country, we would like to respectfully request that Congress maintain the investment in the expansion of Head Start and Early Head Start at the level of \$8.2 billion. In Iowa, this would result in:

- the continuation of services for more than 8,000 children;
- the continuation of services to the 460 additional children funded through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) expansion;
- the retention of more than 46 positions created in the ARRA expansion;
- the resulting economic impact from increased quality of services to families; and
- improved wages to attract the quality staff to help us implement improved programming for those 8,000 children and families.

The Head Start program grantees, nationally, are the largest provider of evidence-based early childhood comprehensive care and education in country. In 2010, Head Start and Early Head Start dollars served nearly 1,000,000 children across the country.

Our Nation's children face greater obstacles than ever before—at the local, national, and international level. More and more children fall behind each day, even as our international peers are gaining on us in educational and economic outcomes. The science is clear that children need responsive care and attention during their earliest weeks, months, and years to build cognitive, social, and emotional skills necessary for healthy growth and development. High-quality care and early childhood education services lead to better academic performance and longer stays in school—as well as a plethora of other positive outcomes.

There is abundant evidence that Head Start and Early Head Start can help. Head Start produces measurable, long-term results such as school-readiness, increased high school graduation rates, and reduced needs for special education. And the more than 27 million Head Start graduates are working every day in our communities to make our country and our economy strong. Locally, our communities support Head Start—more than 20 percent of our funding comes from local sources.

Here in Iowa, 8,191 children and their families are funded to receive services in Head Start and Early Head Start. In 2009–2010, 9,246 children actually received services as we kept enrollment full throughout the program year. Of that total, 5,896 children lived in families who were working or attending job training. Only 1,867 children lived in families receiving TANF benefits. Our families are the working poor.

Let me give you a more detailed picture of how Iowa's Head Start children have been served. In 2009–2010, 9,129 children were given access to medical care. Of that total, 8,737 children completed all of the medical screenings and were up to date on all immunizations, and 1,346 children had identified health problems, including vision and nutrition, corrected. From those, 7,038 children received dental preventive care, and 922 of those children received needed dental treatment. Strikingly, 1,241 children were identified special needs/disabilities early and received the necessary services. An encouraging 3,496 children transitioned to kindergarten reading/writing/ready for school.

Iowa families have benefited in countless ways as well. 8,714 families received Head Start and Early Head Start services in 2009–2010—and 6,822 received at least one specialized family service such as parenting education, health education, housing assistance, substance abuse counseling, and child abuse and neglect services. A total of 539 homeless families representing 592 children were served, and 49 percent of those families acquired housing during the program year. About 64 percent of the families participated in the WIC program.

Here in the Tri-County area, we were able to serve 1,041 children and families during the 2009–2010 program year. Approximately 78 percent of our families that qualify for services because they live in poverty are working.

Head Start has been in Black Hawk County since the first summer time program in 1965. Services to Buchanan County started in 1968 as Head Start expanded to a school year program. In 1989, services began in Grundy County and in 1998 Early Head Start began in Black Hawk County. We are funded to serve 568 children ages 3 and 4, and thanks to ARRA Expansion, 312 Early Head Start children. We are the largest Early Head Start program in the State. Since 1965 this agency has served more than 20,000 children whose families live in poverty in our three-county service area.

Since the 2007 reauthorization of Head Start, quality improvements have been eagerly embraced and are being implemented as quickly as possible. Services to homeless families have been enhanced. We have also strengthened our partnerships with school districts and now serve most of the eligible 4-year-olds in their neighborhood schools. This has enhanced the transition to school for our children, parents, and the school district. Tri-County Child and Family meets 100 percent of the teacher, assistant teacher, and education coordinator education requirements outlined in the language, and in all of Iowa, 77.5 percent of the classroom teachers, and 80 percent of assistant teachers currently meet the requirements—which do not officially go into effect until 2013.

Additionally, our school readiness statistics continue to increase every year as we work with the school districts to assure the Head Start enrolled children receive the comprehensive services of nutrition, health, including mental health and family support services. When children are fed they learn better, when children have dental needs addressed they are able to focus on their learning. Families are able to focus on getting their children to school on a regular basis when they know they are working with caretakers who treat them with the respect and dignity deserving of folks who love their children and are trying hard to provide for them in tough economic times.

Over the past few years, Congress and the administration have prioritized a robust investment in Head Start and Early Head Start through both the ARRA and annual appropriations—these dollars have had tremendous impact in our community. For Tri-County that means we have been able to serve 72 additional children and their families in Early Head Start. We expanded to include Early Head Start services in Buchanan and Grundy Counties through a partnership with Community Action Operation Threshold, and we renovated an Early Head Start center to meet Department of Human Services licensing requirements. We used local contractors and workers to get that job done. We were able to add 14 positions and \$1,558,561 in economic development to the community. Across Iowa \$14.1 million was used to construct and renovate centers, and serve an additional 460 children, provide training and education to staff members, enhance salaries so they are competitive, and recruit good teachers to stay on to serve the neediest children.

Should the additional ARRA Head Start investment be cut, we would have to reduce not only the 72 slots here in the Tri-County area, but possibly more to keep up with the increased costs associated with food, rent, and utilities. This would be devastating at a time when we have begun to make real gains.

Here at Tri-County:

- 69 percent of the children leaving our Head Start program are entering school proficient in national assessments for literacy and language development;
- 66 percent of the children are proficient in math;
- 75 percent are proficient in science;
- 100 percent of our children were up to date on immunizations and 100 percent had at least one physical examination within the past 12 months;
- Our Early Head Start children participated in their well baby checks;
- 81 percent of our 3–4-year-olds were examined by a dentist in our communities;
- 90 percent of our families improved nurturing and attachment between parents and children;
- 92 percent of our families increased their knowledge about child development and parenting;
- 94 percent of our families connected to additional concrete supports within the community—such as health and dental providers, mental health counseling and other agencies; and
- 90 percent of our families maintained or improved healthy family functioning, problem solving, and communication.

And yet, we are still not serving anywhere near the number of families that are eligible for and have need for these services. It is in that regard that we ask the subcommittee to maintain its investment in the expanded Head Start so that we can continue to serve Iowa's vulnerable children and families.

We know what this request means in a time when we must all buckle down and do more with less. However, Head Start is a smart investment—one of the smartest and most effective we make. Study after study has demonstrated that Head Start has yielded a cost-benefit ratio as large as \$7 to \$1.

It makes our families and children healthier—Head Start parents lower Medicaid costs by \$198 per family. Head Start has reduced mortality rates for 5- to 9-year-olds by as much as 50 percent. Head Start programs reduce healthcare costs for employers and individuals because Head Start children are less obese, 8 percent more likely to be immunized, and 19 to 25 percent less likely to smoke as an adult.

Head Start graduates are 5 percent more likely to graduate from high school—and we know that high school graduates contribute more to Federal, State, and local economies than high school dropouts do because these graduates earn \$9,000 more each year than dropouts. Further, Head Start saves our hard-earned tax dollars by decreasing the need for children to receive special education services in elementary schools.

For example, data analysis of a recent Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) evaluation found that a child receiving full-day Head Start services requires 38 percent fewer special education services and saves taxpayers \$700 per child annually. Based on a sample of 195 students, MCPS saves \$129,870 annually by hav-

ing children in Head Start full-day pre-kindergarten versus no MCPS pre-kindergarten.

States can save the \$29,000 per year for each prisoner that it incarcerates because Head Start children are 12 percent less likely to have been charged with a crime.

It's also efficient—compared with other early childhood programs that have generated high Results Over Investments, one Harvard economist calculated that Head Start provides 80 percent of the benefits of small model early childhood programs at 60 percent of the cost. In other words, Head Start is operated more efficiently than these model early childhood programs.

We are very concerned that without adequate funding here at Tri-County, we will need to drop families from our programs and lay off 14 dedicated employees—leaving children more vulnerable as their parents struggle to find affordable care when they are looking for work. The question is whether it is best to make the investment now, or pay a larger price later? Dr. James Heckman, a Nobel Laureate in Economics at the University of Chicago, recommended to the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Reform, “Early Head Start and Head Start are programs on which to build and improve—not to cut.”

President Obama has made education an economic imperative and supports the idea that education starts at birth with families and community. In Iowa, Head Start facilitates both, providing low-income families with the resources to find and sustain work, learn to be better parents, and feel able to leave their children in affordable and high-quality care. We ask the subcommittee to place a priority on comprehensive early childhood education and care through Head Start—ensuring our children start school healthy and ready to learn. The 1,045 children at Tri-County, the 7,146 children in Iowa and the remaining 991,974 children in the Nation are counting on you.

Senator HARKIN. All right. Now we turn to Dr. Durham, chancellor of Allen College of Nursing. Dr. Durham.

**STATEMENT OF JERRY D. DURHAM, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, CHANCELLOR,
ALLEN COLLEGE OF NURSING, WATERLOO, IOWA**

Dr. DURHAM. Thank you very much, Senator Harkin, for inviting me to testify today.

Allen College is a specialized, regionally accredited institution educating nurses and allied health providers. About 95 percent of our students come from Iowa, and the vast majority of them remain in Iowa after they finish their degrees.

About 90 percent of our students are studying for one of our three nursing degrees. Allen College is the only postsecondary institution in this region preparing baccalaureate-level and advanced practice nurses.

Most, 90 percent of Allen College's students receive financial assistance in the form of scholarships, grants, and loans. But even with this financial assistance and income from employment—and most of our students do work full or part time—the 2009–2010 average debt load of our undergraduate degree graduates was about \$28,700 because loans account for the majority, or 72 percent, of their financial assistance.

As you know, our State and our Nation need more nurses. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that the number of nursing jobs will grow from about 2.62 million in 2008 to 3.2 million in 2018, representing a 22 percent increase because of a growing demand for healthcare for our aging baby boomers and the influx of new patients expected as a result of healthcare reform.

Because of projected retirements, the total number of available nursing jobs may also grow to more than 1 million in the future. In Iowa, the surge of nurse retirements is likely in the next decade because 45 percent of Iowa's registered nurses are now 49 years of age or older. According to the Governor's task force report released

in March 2008, Iowa may have as many as 9,100 unfilled RN positions in 10 years.

Federal support of Allen College has been critical to our success in increasing the number of nurses for Iowa. In 2010, Allen College received more than \$440,000 in title VIII funds to support undergraduate and graduate nursing students and to support improvements in our graduate nursing program. These funds were made available through an Advanced Nursing Education Grant, Advanced Education Nursing Traineeships, the Nurse Faculty Loan Program, and scholarships for disadvantaged students.

The Advanced Nursing Education Grant that we received allowed us to hire an instructional designer and additional faculty and staff to increase our enrollments of students from throughout Iowa. In our psychiatric nurse practitioner program, for example, we have doubled our enrollment to 16 students as a result of this critical support.

During the 2009–2010 academic year, 35 of 52 graduates from our master's program received a Federal nurse traineeship. And of those 35, at least 25 are working in medically underserved areas or serving underserved populations.

In past shortages, the Federal Government has provided increases in title VIII funds, which have been very effective in increasing the supply of nurses. Given the projected shortages of registered nurses over the next several years, we very much need to invest in the nursing workforce, and the need has never been greater.

And I would like to say on a personal note, after I was discharged from the service, I attended nursing school at St. Louis University. The Federal Government had given that university a relatively small grant to start what was then called and is still called an accelerated nursing program. It is a 12-month program designed for college graduates.

It was the first one of its type in the country. It was a terribly innovative program. There are now about 200 of those programs. So, as a result of that modest investment on the part of the Federal Government, a movement started which has spread across the United States. Allen College now has the only accelerated program in the State of Iowa.

I would also like to add that I came from a family of seven children. I was the youngest of those seven children. I was the only child to go to college. And as a result of nurse traineeships, I was able to obtain two master's degree in nursing.

I have had a career for 36 years in the field of nursing, as a clinician and as an educator. So that investment in me, as a first member of my family to graduate from college, I think was a wonderful investment on the part of the Federal Government.

So I thank you, Senator, for your service to Iowa and for your wonderful service to our Nation. Thank you.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Durham.

That is a great story. That is a great story. Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JERRY D. DURHAM

Allen College, with a history dating back to 1925, is a specialized, regionally accredited institution educating nurses and allied healthcare providers. About 95 percent of Allen College students are Iowa residents, and most remain in Iowa to work in healthcare following graduation. The College is authorized to confer two health sciences degrees and bachelor's (BSN), master's (MSN), and doctoral (DNP) degrees in nursing. More than 90 percent of Allen College's 500 students are studying for a nursing degree. Our nursing programs are designed to prepare students for licensure as registered nurses (RNs) or to advance their careers following licensure. Allen College is the only postsecondary institution in the Cedar Valley region preparing baccalaureate-level and advanced practice nurses. The more than 150 students enrolled in our MSN program are preparing for careers as nurse practitioners, educators, or leaders. Our nurse practitioner graduates play an increasingly critical role in delivering primary healthcare to Iowa's citizens, especially those in medically underserved areas, because of a decrease in the number of physicians choosing a primary care specialty.

Most (90 percent) of Allen College's students receive financial assistance in the form of scholarships, grants, and loans. Of students receiving financial assistance, 88 percent receive at least one type of Federal assistance. In addition, the majority of our students work full- or part-time in order to pay for the cost of their education. Many also have families to support. But even with this financial assistance and income from employment, the 2009–2010 average debt load of our undergraduate-degree graduates was about \$28,700 because loans (PLUS, Subsidized/Unsubsidized Stafford, Perkins, Alternative) account for the majority (72 percent) of financial aid.

Currently, RNs comprise the largest group of this Nation's health professionals. While the recession has reduced the shortage of RNs in Iowa and elsewhere, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) analysts project that by 2018 more than 580,000 new jobs for RNs will be created. The BLS predicts that the number of nursing jobs will grow from 2.62 million in 2008 to 3.2 million in 2018, a 22 percent increase because of a growing demand for healthcare for aging Baby Boomers and the influx of new patients into the system as a result of healthcare reform. Because 458,000 nurses are predicted to retire in the next few years, the total number of available nursing jobs may grow to more than 1 million. In Iowa, a surge of nurse retirements is likely in the next decade, especially as the U.S. economy recovers, because 45 percent of Iowa's registered nurses are 49 years of age or older. According to a governor's task force report released in March 2008, Iowa had about 8 percent fewer nurses than were needed. This shortfall may increase to 27 percent in the next 10 years, or as many as 9,100 unfilled registered nurse positions (about 22 percent of Iowa's RN current workforce).

To meet the demand for registered nurses, Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) officials estimate the United States must graduate 90 percent more nurses from nursing programs. Because more than 60 percent of our Nation's nurse educators are 50 years of age or older, a probable shortage of nursing faculty is likely to result in fewer admissions to nursing programs. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) recently reported that more than 50,000 qualified nursing applicants were turned away from baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs in 2009–2010 because of a shortage of nursing faculty, clinical sites, classroom space, clinical preceptors, and budget constraints.

Federal support of Allen College has been critical to Allen College's success in increasing the number of well-qualified staff nurses, nurse practitioners, nurse educators, and nurse leaders for Iowa. In fiscal year 2010 Allen College received more than \$440,000 in title VIII funds to support undergraduate and graduate nursing students and to support improvements in our graduate nursing program. These funds were made available through an advanced nursing education grant, advanced education nursing traineeships, the nurse faculty loan program, and scholarships for disadvantaged students. Our students rely upon this support to help them realize their career goals. The advanced nursing education grant that we received allowed us to hire an instructional designer and additional faculty and staff and to increase our enrollment of students throughout Iowa. In our psychiatric nurse practitioner program, for example, we have doubled our enrollment to 16 students as result of this support. During the 2009–10 academic year, 35 of the 52 graduates from our MSN program received Federal nurse traineeship support. Of those 35, at least 25 are working in medically underserved areas and/or serving underserved populations.

The Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs, as well as other Federal programs that provide financial aid, are critical to support students in completing their degree and making their future debt burden manageable—especially in the current recession. In past nurse shortages, the Federal Government has pro-

vided increases in title VIII funds which have been effective in increasing the supply of nurses. Today, continued and increased support for the title VIII program is critically important to schools of nursing and their students if our Nation is to avert a shortage of well-prepared registered nurses. Because registered nurses comprise the largest number of healthcare professionals in our Nation, an adequate nursing workforce is critical to our Nation's future. Given the projected shortages of registered nurses over the next several years, the need invest in the nursing workforce has never been more crucial.

Senator HARKIN. Now we turn to Reverend Mark Anderson. Reverend Anderson, welcome and, again, please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF MARK A. ANDERSON, ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP,
NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA, WAVERLY, IOWA**

Reverend ANDERSON. Chairman Harkin, thank you for the invitation to testify today. I am anxious to describe the work of a unique joint venture.

Barnabas Uplift is an independent, not-for-profit corporation formed out of a partnership of the congregations in Iowa of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its social service agency, Lutheran Services of Iowa. And also, the congregations of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Dubuque and its agency, Catholic Charities, also Muslim American Services and Iowans for Social and Economic Development. We are also assisted by friendly institutions, including Wartburg College and, of course, our community colleges.

I would like to describe all the aspects of Barnabas Uplift, but because of our limited time together, I will narrow my testimony to the Help4Health program. Senator, Hunger in America 2010 is the first research study to capture the significant connection between the recent economic downturn and the increased need for emergency food assistance.

This study reports that at least 40,000 people, including 16,000 children and almost 4,000 seniors, receive food assistance each year just through the Northeast Iowa Food Bank and its agencies. In other words, in Iowa, 1 in 8 individuals are experiencing some kind of food insecurity, meaning they lack consistent access to adequate amounts of nutritious food.

Barnabas Uplift is second to none in its appreciation for food banks and community meals. But handouts and soup kitchens can only address the symptoms of hunger, not the root cause. Why are people hungry? It is not because there is a food shortage. It is because they cannot afford to buy their own food or food for the children.

We cannot end hunger until we end poverty. One of the ways Barnabas Uplift fights poverty is by removing the barriers to job training and placement for the poor, with a special emphasis on outreach to the rural poor. Our outreach strategy, of course, includes utilizing the social service providers ISED and LSI, Catholic Charities, and MAS, to invite their existing clients to apply for the program.

However, it also, and more interestingly, uses pastors and priests and Imams to ask their flocks to seek out members, children, grandchildren, neighbors, students, anyone in the community who needs a boost up the ladder of success. Once a potential client has

been screened, they are invited to be trained as a certified nurse's aide.

In our metropolitan areas, the students are given a scholarship to attend one of our fine community colleges. But in rural areas, a teacher is brought to town, and classes are held in church basements and nursing homes and community education centers.

In some communities, church members provide childcare and even a meal for the student and the whole student's family so class can go on into the evening. Staff people that we call coaches work alongside the instructor to support and encourage the student all the way through to completion.

The program's independent interim evaluation documents that already our outreach strategy was successful in recruiting 187 percent of our goal. To date, 122 students have successfully completed the training.

Senator, of those 122 who completed the program, 95.9 percent have been successfully placed in a job in the healthcare industry. That means 117 Iowa households that once existed at or near poverty level now have a regular income.

Serving as a CNA is both physically and emotionally challenging. But many nursing homes and hospitals reward competent CNAs with tuition reimbursement for those who wish to continue their studies to become LPNs or RNs. So we see the CNA training as not a first job, but the first step into a meaningful career.

The Federal Government has made a small financial investment in the Help4Health program through a Federal allocation, sometimes called an earmark, which you, Senator Harkin, helped us to secure. Thank you.

Since the classroom, the space, the meals, the daycare, the graduation parties, mentoring, outreach, and much more are all donated by the community and by the church, there is only a small administrative cost above approximately \$700 tuition per student. This is what the earmark pays for, tuition and some administration.

So just imagine for about \$700, a household can be made independent from monthly support checks from the Government. These funds not only help the families, but they also provide desperately needed workers to care for our sick and our elderly and transform households from taxpayer supported to being taxpayers themselves.

And of course, the smaller the community, the larger the impact. For example, if you can imagine 10 households in a place like Oelwein moved from being unemployed to gainfully employed, that is a big difference for the families. It is a big difference for the whole community.

Seven hundred dollar tuition is often an investment that pays for itself in a matter of weeks. Unfortunately, the media sometimes portrays earmarks as free money to be frittered away. The reality is so much different.

The good stewardship of this public money is continually monitored, including goals and timelines to meet and regular reports to submit, even onsite inspections. Every penny must be accounted for, and every obligation met.

Senator, you should know that in communities—Iowa Falls, Radcliffe, and now Postville—individual donors are so inspired by the

Federal Government's support and by your leadership that they are personally financing the program out of their own pockets. On the other hand, because the allocation your office helped us to get to continue this work did not pass the House in the omnibus bill, for many cities, particularly our larger cities and our hardest to reach students, this program is soon going to come to an end.

Thank you, Senator, for this opportunity to testify and for you walking with the poorest members of our society.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you very much, Reverend Anderson.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REV. MARK A. ANDERSON

Chairman Harkin, thank you for the invitation to testify today. I am anxious to describe for you the work of a unique new joint venture. "Barnabas Uplift" is an independent, not-for-profit corporation formed out of a partnership of the churches in Iowa of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its social service agency, Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI); the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Dubuque and its agency, Catholic Charities; Muslim American Services; and Iowans for Social and Economic Development (ISED). We are also assisted by friendly institutions including Wartburg College, and our community colleges.

I would like to describe all aspects of Barnabas Uplift but, because of our limited time together, I will narrow my remarks to the "Help4Health" Program. Senator, "Hunger In America 2010" is the first research study to capture the significant connection between the recent economic downturn and an increased need for emergency food assistance. This study released by Feeding America, the Nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, reports that at least 40,000 people, including more than 16,000 children and almost 4,000 seniors, receive food assistance each year just through the Northeast Iowa Food Bank and its member agencies. In Iowa, 1 in 8 individuals are experiencing food insecurity, meaning that they lack consistent access to adequate amounts of nutritious food.

Barnabas Uplift is second to none in its appreciation for food banks and community meals. But handouts and soup kitchens can only address the symptoms of hunger and not the root cause. Why are people hungry? It is not because there is a food shortage. It is because they cannot afford to buy food. We cannot end hunger until we end poverty. One of the ways Barnabas Uplift fights poverty is by removing the barriers to job training and placement for the poor with a special emphasis on outreach to the rural poor. Our outreach strategy, of course, includes utilizing the social service providers at ISED, LSI and Catholic Charities to invite their existing clients to apply for this program. However, it also uses pastors, priests, and imams to ask their flocks to seek out members, children, grandchildren, neighbors, students, anyone in the community who needs a boost up the ladder of success. Once a potential client has been screened, they are invited to be trained as Certified Nursing Aids (CNA). In our metropolitan areas, the students are simply given a scholarship to attend one of our fine community colleges. In rural areas, a teacher is brought to the town and classes are held in church basements, nursing homes, and community education centers. In some communities, church members provide childcare and even a meal for the student and the student's whole family so class can continue into the evening. Staff people we call "coaches" work along side the instructor to support and encourage the student through to completion.

The program's independent interim evaluation documents that already our outreach strategy was successful in recruiting 187 percent of our goal. To date, 122 students have successfully completed the training. Senator, of those 122 who completed the program, 95.9 percent have been successfully placed in a job in the healthcare industry. That means 117 Iowa households that existed at or near poverty level now have a regular income. Serving as a CNA is both physically and emotionally challenging, but many nursing homes and hospitals reward competent CNAs with tuition reimbursement for those who wish to continue their studies to become LPNs or even RNs. So, we see the CNA training as not a first job but a first step in a career.

The Federal Government has made a small financial investment in the Help4Health program through a Federal allocation sometimes called an "earmark" which you, Senator Harkin, helped us to secure. Since the classroom space, meals, daycare, graduation parties, mentoring, outreach, and much more are all donated by the community, there is only a small administrative cost above the approximately \$700 tuition per student. This is what the "earmark" pays for, tuition and

some administration. Just imagine, for about \$700 a household can be made independent of monthly support checks from the Government. These funds not only help these families but also provide desperately needed workers to care for the sick and elderly, and transform households from taxpayer-supported to being taxpayers. Of course, the smaller the community the larger the impact, for example, if we can help 10 people in Oelwein move from unemployed to gainfully employed, that makes a big difference for both the families and community. This is often an investment that pays for itself in a matter of weeks.

Unfortunately, the media has sometimes portrayed these “earmarks” as free money frittered away. The reality is much different. The good stewardship of this public money is continually monitored including goals and timelines to meet, regular reports to submit and even inspections. Each and every penny must be accounted for and every obligation met.

Senator, you should know that in the communities of Iowa Falls, Radcliffe and now Postville, individual donors are so inspired by the Federal Government’s support they are personally financing the program in their own communities out of their own pockets. On the other hand, because the allocation your office helped us with to continue this work did not pass the house in the omnibus bill, for many cities this program will soon come to an end.

Senator HARKIN. And now, Jonathan Keniston. Welcome. I read your testimony, and it is very profound. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF JONATHAN KENISTON, STUDENT, HAWKEYE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WATERLOO, IOWA

Mr. KENISTON. Thank you, Senator, for the opportunity to speak today.

Hello. My name is Jonathan Keniston. I am a 31-year-old student currently attending Hawkeye Community College in Waterloo, Iowa.

I am here today because I was asked to tell you a little bit about my life experiences and how the Pell grant has aided in my educational journey and success. First, I would like to tell you a little bit about myself.

I was born and raised in Waterloo, Iowa, and have lived here for most of my life. After graduating from East High School, I enlisted in the United States Air Force, where I was trained as a munitions specialist and a military policeman. My service to our country was an unforgettable experience that took me around the world and was instrumental in providing the foundational skills and values that have guided my life since then.

Following my enlistment, I returned home to Waterloo in the summer of 2001. After only being home for a month, a friend and I were driving home when we were struck head on by a drunk driver traveling at 75 miles an hour, causing serious injury to me and taking the life of a childhood friend.

After being released from the hospital, I had to go through physical rehabilitation. Five months into therapy, I was rear-ended by another drunk driver, causing more injuries, forcing me to start the rehabilitation process all over again. The time I spent in physical therapy prompted my initial interest in the medical field, and from there, the desire continued to grow.

In the fall of 2002, I met my beautiful wife, Emily. Not wasting any time, we were married 2 years later in the fall of 2004. Shortly after getting married, we were overjoyed by the arrival of our first child, a little girl named Ellie Jo, who is now 5 years old and daddy’s little girl. This was the best time in my life, newly married and becoming a new father to a precious little girl.

Feeling like I was on top of the world and enjoying my new career as a realtor in the Cedar Valley, I realized how quickly things can change in life with my father's unexpected failing health. He was diagnosed with congestive heart failure. Throughout the next year, he struggled through a brain hemorrhage, leading to multiple seizures resulting in a brain aneurysm ending his battle with heart disease.

While dealing with this great despair of losing my father, these emotions were overshadowed by the news of expecting our first son, who bears my father's middle name, Austin James, who is now 3 years old. Last, but not least, 17 months later, our family grew once again with the addition of our youngest child, Ian Scott, who is now 2 years old.

My experience with rehabilitation following the car accidents, the events and complications of my father's disease, and the wonderful experience of the births of my three children, a new desire was growing in my heart to redirect my career toward the medical field. After selling real estate for several years in the Cedar Valley, I wanted a healthier, more stable lifestyle for my family with a brighter financial future that only higher education could provide.

With numerous responsibilities at this point in my life and changing careers, enduring the financial struggles of achieving a higher education seemed almost unattainable and frightening, to say the least. Researching tuition and the cost of living for my family, the actual expense of college grew exponentially.

With the help of Pell grants and financial aid, we were able to make our decision that I was going to attend Hawkeye Community College in the fall of 2009. Committing to school, my wife and I were faced with several critical financial decisions, beginning with restructuring our lifestyle, selling our home for a more affordable one, and trading our vehicle in for a smaller, more fuel-efficient model.

Walking through the doors on the first day of school, I felt nervous and out of place. But I viewed school as my new job, with the attitude of "failure is not an option." Jumping in head first, I registered and completed a total of 34 credit hours my first year at college.

After achieving a 4.0 GPA, I was placed on the dean's list, was awarded a scholarship this spring, and given an invitation to the Phi Theta Kappa honor society. In addition, I have been accepted into the radiography program at Allen College in Waterloo, starting this fall following May graduation.

The Pell grants have helped me attend school full time, including attending classes over both Christmas breaks and last summer, covering the majority of the average full-time tuition cost. The Pell grants provided me with the financial ability to worry less about the cost of college, permitting me to focus on my academics and allowing me to enroll in additional classes every semester, enabling me to graduate sooner.

The money that I have received from the Pell grant program has lessened my fears of leaving college only with student loans and no degree. These funds make the dreams of obtaining a college degree more realistic, even with the cost of higher education continuously increasing. With both my wife and I currently taking advantage of

the Pell grants, it has relieved an enormous financial burden off of our family, making it possible for my wife to pursue a career as a dental hygienist.

My future plans and goals are to graduate from the radiography program at Allen College and then attend the University of Iowa to seek a bachelor's degree in radiation science and enter a master's degree program. I have proven myself through adversity and challenges in my past to get to this point in my life and will continue to press forward toward my goals and aspirations.

If the Pell grant program funding is cut dramatically, coupled with the rising costs of tuition, I feel that my college educational goals will be driven further out of my financial grasp. The reduction in Pell funding would also restrict my family by allowing only one of us to attend college part time, greatly extending our time spent in college and limiting my financial ability to support my family and further my educational goals in completing my bachelor's and master's degree.

Thank you very much for your time.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you, Jonathan. Great story. Congratulations.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JONATHAN KENISTON

Hello, my name is Jonathan Keniston. I am a 31-year-old student currently attending Hawkeye Community College in Waterloo, Iowa. I am here today because I was asked to tell you a little about my life experiences and how the Pell grant has aided in my educational journey and success. First, I would like to tell you a little about myself. I was born and raised in Waterloo, Iowa, and have lived here for most of my life. After graduating from East High School, I enlisted in the United States Air Force where I was trained as a munitions specialist and military policeman. My service to our country was an unforgettable experience that took me around the world and was instrumental in providing the foundational skills and values that have guided my life since then. Following my enlistment, I returned home to Waterloo in the summer of 2001. After only being home for a month, a friend and I were driving home when we were struck head-on by a drunken driver traveling at 75 miles per hour causing serious injuring to me and taking the life of a childhood friend. After being released from the hospital, I had to go through physical rehabilitation. Five months into therapy, I was rear-ended by another drunken driver, causing more injuries which forced me to start the rehabilitation process all over again. The time I spent in physical therapy prompted my initial interest in the medical field and from there the desire continued to grow.

In the fall of 2002, I met my beautiful wife, Emily. Not wasting any time, we were married 2 years later in the fall of 2004. Shortly after getting married, we were overjoyed by the arrival of our first child, a little girl named, Ellie Jo, who is now 5 years old and daddy's little girl. This was the best time in my life, newly married and becoming a new father to a precious little girl. Feeling like I was on top of the world and enjoying my new career as a Realtor in the Cedar Valley, I realized how quickly things can change in life with my father's unexpected failing health. He was diagnosed with congestive heart failure. Throughout the next year, he struggled through a brain hemorrhage leading to multiple seizures resulting in a brain aneurysm ending his battle with heart disease. While dealing with the great despair of losing my father, these emotions were overshadowed by the news of expecting our first son who bears my father's middle name—Austin James, who is now 3 years old. Last, but not least, 17 months later, our family grew once again, with the addition of our youngest child, Ian Scott, who is now 2 years old.

My experience with rehabilitation following the car accidents, the events and complications of my father's disease, and the wonderful experience of the births of my three children, a new desire was growing in my heart to redirect my career toward the medical field. After selling real estate for several years in the Cedar Valley, I wanted a healthier more stable lifestyle for my family with a brighter financial future that only higher education could provide. With numerous responsibilities at this point in my life and changing careers, enduring the financial struggles of

achieving higher education seemed almost unobtainable and frightening—to say the least. Researching tuition and the cost of living for my family, the actual expense of college grew exponentially. With the help of Pell grants and financial aid, we were able to make our decision that I was going to attend Hawkeye Community College in the fall of 2009. Committing to school, my wife and I were faced with several critical financial decisions beginning with restructuring our lifestyle, selling our home for a more affordable one and trading our vehicle in for a smaller more fuel-efficient model.

Walking through the doors on the first day of school, I felt nervous and out of place, but I viewed school as my new job with the attitude of—failure is not an option. Jumping in head first, I registered and completed a total of 34 credit hours my first year at college. After achieving a 4.0 GPA, I was placed on the Dean's List, was awarded a scholarship this spring, and given an invitation to the Phi Theta Kappa Honor's Society. In addition, I have been accepted into the Radiography program at Allen College in Waterloo, starting this fall following May graduation. The Pell grants have helped me attend school full-time including attending classes over both Christmas breaks and last summer covering the majority of the average full-time tuition cost. The Pell grants provided me with the financial ability to worry less about the cost of college—permitting me to focus on my academics and allowing me to enroll in additional classes every semester enabling me to graduate sooner. The money that I have received from the Pell grant program has lessened my fears of leaving college with only student loans and no degree. These funds make the dreams of obtaining a college degree more realistic even with the cost of higher education continuously increasing. With both my wife and I currently taking advantage of Pell grants, it has relieved an enormous financial burden off our family making it possible for my wife to pursue a career as a dental hygienist.

My future plans and goals are to graduate from the radiography program at Allen College, and then attend The University of Iowa to seek a bachelor's degree in radiation science, and enter a master's degree program. I have proven myself through adversity and challenges in my past to get to this point in my life and I will continue to press forward toward my goals and aspirations. If the Pell grant program funding is cut dramatically, coupled with the rising cost of tuition, I feel that my college educational goals will be driven further out of my financial grasp. The reduction in Pell funding would also restrict my family by allowing only one of us to attend college part-time, greatly extending our time spent in college, and limiting my financial ability to support my family and further my educational goals in completing my bachelor's and master's degrees. Thank you.

Senator HARKIN. Well, I think all of us now can see from the testimony of all these witnesses that there are profound effects on what we do in Washington and how we shepherd and dispense with our taxpayers' dollars. And so, as I said in my opening statement, the deficits we have are unsustainable. We all know that.

Now we do have to bring them under control. But in doing so, as I said at the beginning, we have to be careful that we don't eat our seed corn, as we like to say in Iowa, and that we don't just say, well, we will just push it off on the backs of our most vulnerable. Well, they don't have a lot of money. They don't have powerful lobbyists in Washington.

But they rely upon good people like all of you here to give them hope and to give them opportunity and to make sure that the other Jonathan Kenistons out there and the other ones that you mentioned, Dr. Allen—I forgot her name—the young woman you mentioned who is a chemistry student now?

Dr. ALLEN. Yes. Reygan Freney, on our staff now, faculty.

Senator HARKIN. To make sure that we know there are more out there like her and like Jonathan and others, and we have just got to make sure that we don't leave them behind and that we make sure that they have every opportunity to succeed. And so, that is really the purpose of this hearing and other hearings I will be having on this subject is to make the record on that and to show that

we have people out there that need some assistance, that need maybe just a little boost up—Head Start, a Pell grant.

A person on disability needs to make sure that their case is heard right away. I know you don't do disability in your office, but as an example of that. Or as you said, someone who is on SSI, and they don't have anything. Can they afford to wait 1 month or 2 months? They can't afford—

Mr. NELSON. No, they can't.

Senator HARKIN [continuing]. To do that. So we have an obligation to meet, and we are going to do everything we can to meet that obligation.

Now I said that my staff had passed out some cards, and I have staff around here. Now would be a good time if you have questions to pass them in and give them to her, and I will try to get to those questions as many as I can.

Dr. Allen, let me just start kind of a round of questions with you. By law, the Federal Government must by February 1, if I am not mistaken, must make known what the Pell grant awards will be for the next school year so that colleges can plan on it. And so, by law, the Department of Education, I think, just in the last week, if I am not mistaken, sent out to the colleges what those awards would be so that Dr. Allen and our other college presidents—I am sure you, too, Dr. Durham—can look at that and say, okay, here is basically what we can expect from the Pell grant program.

Now, by law, we have to do that, and it makes sense for planning purposes. Now we have the funding bill in the Congress right now that will be up in March, and some of the proposals are to make drastic cuts in that, which then would reduce the amount of money in the Pell grant program.

Dr. Allen, what would that do to you and the university? Right now, you are planning. You have got that from the Department of Education. So now you are starting to plan ahead for that. What happens if in March that all of a sudden that is cut by 24 percent, and then we don't know if that is going to hold. It bounces back and forth and back and forth. Just what is the impact on you and I of that kind of a process and the possibility of a 24 percent cut from what you have already been told you are getting?

Dr. ALLEN. Senator Harkin, let me first answer in the context of the university, but maybe more importantly, on the context of the student. From the university's point of view, it clearly challenges our financial aid office who works very hard, diligently to put together financial packages, including the Pell grant, including private scholarships, loans. And so, if this would change by that magnitude, it would destroy kind of the interconnections there in terms of what we could offer.

Now that would then force us to reconsider issues such as our set-aside percentage, which is about 18 percent. Would that have to go up? If so, from the university's perspective, it would create a lot of challenges. And quite honestly, I think it could affect our enrollment.

But more importantly, what does it do for the student?

Senator HARKIN. Student, yes.

Dr. ALLEN. Because the families are trying to plan for next year, and we are partly guilty of this ourselves at the university. We still

have not decided on the tuition level for next year. But for the families who are trying to budget for next year, this would change that late in the year. It would create a tremendous challenge for them.

The students will probably have to find additional opportunities to work on campus or off campus. They may have to delay their education. But the other thing that happens here, and I didn't talk about this much, it affects, I think, the success of our students because if they get less money from the Pell grant, they work more hours, less time for study. And so, it is simply a cascading effect on not only accessibility, but also on success of the students.

Senator HARKIN. Mm-hmm. Dr. Allen, you mentioned a couple of people in your testimony. One you mentioned was Danielle Stuck?

Dr. ALLEN. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. A Pell grant recipient. She is a junior. What you didn't tell us is that she was valedictorian of her class of 312, carries a perfect 4.0 grade point average, and is a member of the honors program. And this is someone who is, I guess, again relying upon a Pell grant?

Dr. ALLEN. That is correct.

Senator HARKIN. Is she here?

Dr. ALLEN. Danielle, I am not sure she is. But if she is, I hope she does stand up.

Senator HARKIN. Danielle Stuck is—well, maybe—

Dr. ALLEN. She is probably studying.

Senator HARKIN. Yes, with a 4.0 grade point average, she probably is. Doesn't have time for this.

But it is just again—

Dr. ALLEN. But let me add to your comment, Senator.

Senator HARKIN. Yes.

Dr. ALLEN. The reason we didn't put all that in there, when she provided us the information, she did not tell us about that valedictorian. She was focused on what she was able to gain from the Pell grant and did not brag about her accomplishments. We had to get permission to even state the 4.0 grade point average because of obvious confidentiality issues.

So all this came out after the fact, and so that is why I said it would be a great loss if we couldn't have her this—give her this opportunity to get an education.

Senator HARKIN. And she has no parental support?

Dr. ALLEN. No.

Senator HARKIN. As I understand, whatsoever?

Dr. ALLEN. That is correct.

Senator HARKIN. Senator Dotzler, you chair important committees in the State senate. You did mention the WIA program. You went on quite a bit about the WIA and the support that we have for the dislocated worker program.

Now under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, so-called stimulus, there was—Iowa received another \$10 million through the dislocated worker program and then another \$9 million—oh, I am sorry. There was \$9 million that came in under the Recovery and Investment Act and \$10 million for dislocated workers. So, again, these helped, as I understand, train displaced workers for employment in new fields, temporary jobs, cleaning up and recovery efforts in the wake of flooding, tornadoes.

Now I understand the House—our House of Representatives—are threatening to cut these programs by an 8 percent cut or more. Is that right? Is that right, 8 percent cut? Okay.

So if we cut all those things, the WIA programs, by 8 percent, what does that mean here in Iowa on worker training, just on worker training in Iowa?

Mr. DOTZLER. Well, Senator, what it means is that workers won't get the training they need. They will sit on unemployment benefits longer and longer until they exhaust them, and you know how difficult it is to give continual extensions on unemployment to get through Congress. And as a net result, we will end up putting people more on the welfare rolls.

We are finding today that people who are long-term unemployed, who are working hard to try to get a job, are viewed in a way by employers that—in suspect. And so, we are working with our community colleges, and I mentioned Kirkwood. But I know Hawkeye and other community colleges have been looking at shorter-term training programs that are specific to what employers say their needs are, to give them certified skill sets that will upgrade their skills in a kind of a short-term basis at least to make them employable and allow them to move forward.

But when you talk about individuals, and I mentioned Donnie Stanley, who was an unemployed mother. She was on welfare, and it was really a combination of programs through Pell grants and workforce dollars, and they all go together to kind of add to a total package that will allow somebody to get the education skills they need. And because of that, she found a career that she really loves.

And I had an opportunity to talk to her this week, and she is planning on going on ahead in nursing. She has several children she is taking care of on her own. So she is working full time, trying to go to additional education, and the main thing is she is not on welfare, and she is helping her family.

And so, those training dollars also, you know, allow the employers to find the workers they need. When we got 6.3 percent unemployment in the State of Iowa, it is still 100,000 people out of work. And you would think that every employer could find the workers that they need, but we still have job openings that are out there. Some of them require college degrees, but there are plenty of skill sets that are short, especially in construction trades and nursing, areas that—nurse's aides that require a little bit less.

And these dollars are so important to get these workers in to meet the employer's need, and they help expand our economy. We get a return for our investment.

Senator HARKIN. Sure.

Mr. DOTZLER. So those dollars are important. We utilized them in very important ways, and you saw the success numbers on the return for the investment just on wages. So it is something that we really need to—as you said, that is the seed corn that is really producing our crop of skilled workers, and it is so important, especially when you are talking about low-income and disadvantaged workers and people who lost their jobs.

Senator HARKIN. You mentioned one other thing that I wanted to just get into a little bit about your brother-in-law—

Mr. DOTZLER. Yes.

Senator HARKIN [continuing]. Who had lost his job, was moving to another job——

Mr. DOTZLER. He was employed in a new job.

Senator HARKIN. But he hadn't got his health insurance.

Mr. DOTZLER. Right. Because you usually have a probationary period, and he was in his 50s, a young man. And he couldn't afford the COBRA, which you are allowed to carry your insurance. But when you are unemployed and on unemployment——

Senator HARKIN. How can you pay for it?

Mr. DOTZLER [continuing]. Benefits and have a family, that is really difficult. So, and my sister doesn't have health insurance. And so, it worked out that they thought they could get by, and he had this heart attack when we were at a family funeral. And he drove himself to the hospital, and it was a major heart attack, and he was lucky he survived.

But he went through that. He got out, and they said, well, you need a stent on the other side. You have got a 90 percent blockage in another artery, and we need to do this immediately. And he said, "I can't do it. I have already drove this debt. I don't have insurance. I have to wait." And he had a couple of close calls between times and then finally had the procedures.

But it points to how important the Healthcare Act really is to the citizens of Iowa. And we also have heard from employers that that is one of the limiting factors that they have is dealing with healthcare costs in hiring new people, and that is why those tax credits that you have put into that program are so important to our economy and to help people move forward.

The increase on health insurance rates, 24 percent to an individual who is taking care of her mother on a limited income. Her mother has severe dementia, and she is a full-time daycare provider and night care provider, and she can't afford those increases. But it is either that or go without insurance. So these things affect Iowans in many, many ways, and that is just a couple of stories, Senator. There are hundreds of them across the State.

Senator HARKIN. Well, that is all changing.

Mr. DOTZLER. Thank God.

Senator HARKIN. That is all changing. By 2014, by the time we phase this all in, first of all, people will not be locked into a job. There are a lot of people now that feel a job lock. They have to stay in a job because they can't afford to give up their health insurance.

They might even want to go out and start a new business, a small business, be an entrepreneur. Can't do it if they lose their health insurance. So, from now on, that won't happen any longer.

And if you move to a new job, you will have your coverage and take it with you. And again, in your brother-in-law's case or cases like that, he will not be denied insurance because he has a pre-existing condition. So, again, I think this is going to do a great thing for business and for business growth and economic growth down the road.

Mr. DOTZLER. I agree.

Senator HARKIN. Mr. Nelson, you know, I have been in Government a long time. And you always hear about the term "bureaucrats." You hear bureaucrats, bureaucrats. Usually it is used as almost like a pejorative term. I just want you to know this is one

United States Senator that appreciates bureaucrats like you and the kind of job that you do.

Mr. NELSON. Thank you.

Senator HARKIN. We have so many good people out there like you, and I don't know all the people that work for you that come to work every day. They are helping people's lives, helping them through rough times. And especially in the Social Security Administration, just doing great work. And I just want you to know, I think I speak for a lot of people here, we really appreciate that very, very much.

Mr. NELSON. Thank you.

Senator HARKIN. I thought about this furlough business. Did you say maybe up to 3 weeks of furlough? Did you say that?

Mr. NELSON. I didn't say that, no. I have heard that.

Senator HARKIN. Oh, I have heard that, too.

Mr. NELSON. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. What would happen? What happens?

Mr. NELSON. Oh, what would happen? You know, as a member of the community, just the thought of shutting down the Waterloo office for even a day would be painful to imagine. And I mentioned some of the things earlier. I mean, our first priority is to provide excellent service to the public in the Waterloo area here.

And there are so many individuals in need, as we talked about earlier, vulnerable adults. They come into our office on a daily basis, and some of them aren't even really sure what they need, and we help them through the process all along and refer them to the right agencies. We are doing the right things to help them.

Earlier in my statement, I mentioned that Social Security is one of the most successful Government programs ever created, and the reason for that is we keep the elderly out of poverty. More than one-half would fall in poverty if not for Social Security. I think the chairman, Senator Reid, said it was the greatest program even in the world, I think, was his quote. I will take him for his word on that.

Senator HARKIN. At least in this country it has been great.

Mr. NELSON. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. Ms. Young-Kent, again, reminding us of our meeting 18 years ago, you focused a lot on the Head Start program. Two things I want you to just elaborate a little bit on, the Early Head Start program, and also the fact that Head Start encompasses more than just education. And it covers a lot of wraparound services.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Right.

Senator HARKIN. Could you just talk about a family whose child is getting Head Start services and what things that family also gets as a benefit from that?

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. First, talking about Early Head Start, we are now encompassing families as early as prenatal moms.

Senator HARKIN. That is right.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. And so, we are going to begin service with that mom and make sure that she is getting to her medical appointments so that she is meeting targets for good nutrition for herself and for the baby. Meets those necessary and needed medical pieces for healthy birth outcomes.

Then we are going to continue the services with that family. One of my favorite programs is our Early Head Start Home Base program, and that is where our home visitors, who have all degrees in either social work or education, are in the home with our families for 90 minutes at least every week, and then they do some socialization on top of that every month.

But in that Home Base program, they are working directly with the families. So we are setting goals as a family. We are also doing child development. So we are making sure kids are healthy. Head Start does encompass the medical, mental health, dental, all of those good kind of things. We make sure kids are up to date on all of their requirements. We follow the EPSDT standards in terms of early and periodic—and what is all that stuff, Jerry?

Anyway, make all those things happen. So kids are healthy and ready to learn. Dental health is huge for us. All of the children in our program, even in our Early Head Start program, after the age of 12 months are seen by a dentist. There are pediatric dentists available in our community, thank you very much. And they have provided wonderful opportunities for us to partner together so we can get those services to kids and families.

We had a number of children I can name about—well, one is going to happen tomorrow or on Monday, excuse me. But families who have to—who have significant enough dental issues that they have to have surgery. And the dentists put the children to sleep so that they can do the massive kind of work that needs to be done.

And if kids don't have decent dental health, they can't eat. And if they can't eat, they can't grow. And if they can't grow, then there are all kinds of stuff that comes into that.

We also provide comprehensive services in terms of developmental environments and assessments and screens so that kids are on target to do the things that they need to get done and be ready to start school. Sixty-three percent of our kids left our Head Start program at or above proficient, ready to go to kindergarten—

Senator HARKIN. Good.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT [continuing]. In literacy and language.

Senator HARKIN. Good.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Better in every one, 100 percent of them had medical treatment. The kids that needed treatment got treatment. So we are providing that whole gamut and helping families at the same time set those goals so that they don't have to worry so much about their children while they are worrying and doing—pursuing their job training opportunities and their skilled labor opportunities as well.

Senator HARKIN. Just as a side footnote-type thing, as you know, we are right now in negotiations and we are developing the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the so-called “No Child Left Behind.” I hope to have that through our committee around Easter time.

One of the goals that I think we have good bipartisan support on is to more closely align the Head Start program, the educational aspect of that, with what kids need to have when they enter kindergarten or first grade. And so, I am working with the Head Start Association, the national association, to help try to develop what those would be. How would you set those kind of guidelines so that

kids get the education they need to be proficient when they enter first grade?

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Right.

Senator HARKIN. So if you have thoughts along that line because, obviously, you are doing some things pretty successfully—

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Yes.

Senator HARKIN [continuing]. If your kids are meeting these proficiencies when they enter school.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. And we don't have an achievement gap.

Senator HARKIN. Mm-hmm. Well, that is good. That is nice.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. That is great. That is another term?

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. We have failing schools, but we also have achievement gaps. Even in good schools, we have achievement gaps between students. And so, you say in your group, you don't have that achievement gap.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. That is correct.

Senator HARKIN. Well, if you have any thoughts on how we might fashion the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to more closely align with Head Start, just from your own personal standpoint, I would like to know about it.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Okay.

Senator HARKIN. Okay, thanks.

Dr. Durham, just I was just thinking here, what is the—if there is an average, what is the average starting salary or wages of an RN in Iowa?

Dr. DURHAM. In Iowa, it is between \$40,000 and \$45,000. Around the Cedar Valley, new RNs right out of school would start between \$20 and \$22 an hour.

Senator HARKIN. Mm-hmm. I keep hearing that a lot of our nurses are leaving and going to some other States, that there is a drain on our well-qualified RNs.

Dr. DURHAM. Well, at least our graduates generally stay in Iowa. And interestingly—

Senator HARKIN. Well, that is nice.

Dr. DURHAM [continuing]. Even when they leave Iowa, a lot of them come back when they decide to start families.

Senator HARKIN. That is true.

Dr. DURHAM. Because they love Iowa.

Senator HARKIN. That is true.

Dr. DURHAM. And it is true that States that have greater shortages than Iowa, of course, do come to Iowa, just as they do in education to recruit teachers. They come to Iowa to recruit nurses. So—

Senator HARKIN. In a way, that speaks well for us.

Dr. DURHAM. Speaks well for us.

Senator HARKIN. But it also makes us want to make sure that we keep more of them here in the State of Iowa. But again, with that kind of a starting salary, if a student graduates with a debt load of \$25,000 or \$30,000, which could be oppressive.

Dr. DURHAM. Generally, nurses in many other States are paid a higher salary.

Senator HARKIN. That is right.

Dr. DURHAM. So they could go to Minnesota, for example, and work at Mayo at \$28 to \$30 an hour to start without a much higher cost of living. And we do have a fair number of graduates who go to Mayo and to other places. I am sure you are aware that the reimbursement rate for medical care in Iowa is not very high, which is one of the reasons why the salaries for nurses, both starting nurses and experienced nurses, is lower in comparison to many other States.

Senator HARKIN. Just again, to follow up on that, I worked very closely with the Congressman from this area, Congressman Braley, when we passed the healthcare bill to get that bump-up in the reimbursement rate.

Dr. DURHAM. Yes. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. That is in there. So a repeal of healthcare would wipe that out.

Dr. DURHAM. Yes. We greatly appreciate that assistance because it has been a problem for so many years in this State.

Senator HARKIN. Yes. Long, long, time.

Reverend Anderson, again, we talked about earmarks. I guess you mentioned it. I didn't. And for those of you in the audience and others, I have always been a very strong proponent of what has been called earmarks. I don't even know why it is called that.

We have always referred to it as "congressionally directed funding" because Congress directs it one way or the other. I always give a little tutorial on the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution of the United States gives the power of the purse to Congress, not to the President.

The President of the United States cannot spend one nickel of taxpayers' dollars except for what the Congress gives him the authority to do. And so, it has almost gotten to the point now where the President says they get to decide where all the money goes. Well, that is not so. That is not so.

And so, we have fought hard in Congress to retain the right and to retain what is a constitutional obligation to direct monies to certain things. A lot of the programs that you have, like Barnabas Uplift, is the kind of a program, it doesn't fit into a niche. I mean it doesn't fit into Social Security. It doesn't fit into WIA. It doesn't fit into some structured kind of program.

And so, those of us who have this authority and responsibility would look at things like this, and you say, can we help them out? Is there some way that we can direct some money to programs like this to see if they really work? Sometimes they don't. Quite honestly, sometimes we put money into certain things, and they just don't pan out very well.

But we can put a small amount of money into programs like this. They are backed by a lot of times religious institutions, nongovernmental organizations, Boys and Girls Clubs or the Y, or things like that, and so you get a lot of bounce off of that dollar out there. And they really do take one dollar of taxpayer money and really magnify it a great deal and help a lot of people.

And so, we look at those very closely. And Barnabas Uplift, from everything that I have been able to see and my staff has been able to see, is one of those that just does a wonderful job in taking a taxpayer dollar and boosting it a lot, and helping people that don't

quite fit into a structure or someplace that would come from Washington.

And so, that is why I happen to have a disagreement with my own President on this. But it is a funny thing about Presidents. I don't know what it is. They just think they get to run everything.

And I don't care what party they are. Every President that I have known since Jimmy Carter, and I have been there since Carter. Well, I was there with Ford. Every single one of them, it doesn't make a difference whether they are Republicans or Democrats, once they get in there, they think they got to run it and Congress doesn't count for anything. And this President is in the same mold. I don't know why it is, but they get there.

So we are having this little bit of a battle, but we have had it before with other Presidents. And so, we are going to do everything we can to, again, make sure that we are able to respond to needs, to seek out and find good people who are doing wonderful things in their community that may need just a little bit of help to do something.

So I am glad you brought that up. I wasn't going to talk about it, but I think that people should understand when the President says he is going to veto any bill with earmarks, he is going to have to veto his own budget.

Now next week, when does the President's budget come out? Next week?

MALE SPEAKER. February 14.

Senator HARKIN. February 14, the President's budget comes out. I will give you a little preview. I am going to go over to the floor of the Senate. I am going to have a chart there. I am going to have the President's budget—Office of Management and Budget (OMB), that is the President's budget arm—they are going to have their budget.

And guess what? There are going to be certain programs that are going to increase and certain things that are going to decrease. That is the President's earmark. That is what the President wants to do.

Well, what about what we in Congress may want to do? We may not want to do exactly like the President wants to do, but that are his earmarks. That is his decision on how to spend taxpayers' dollars. And so, when we earmark money, that is our decision on how we should spend it. And quite frankly, I think we have the upper hand because the Constitution of the United States is clear. Only Congress has the power of the purse and not the executive branch.

So I didn't mean to get off on that. But it is just that I feel very strongly, as you can tell, about—

Mr. DOTZLER. We are with you.

Senator HARKIN [continuing]. Keeping our ability to help good people and good things out there that I have done work with Boys and Girls Clubs and the Y and so many other things where just a little bit of funds really go a long way. So I guess that wasn't so much of a question as to just elaborate a little bit upon what you said.

But give us just another little flavor of this. How do you find the people that help you so much? You have a lot of people who volun-

teer their time on the weekends, evenings. How do you find people like that?

Reverend ANDERSON. Iowans, particularly small-town Iowans really want to help their neighbors. My favorite story is Iowa Falls. I was there making a presentation describing what we are doing in Waterloo with Barnabas Uplift. And an elderly woman with a walker came over and asked me, "Well, what would that cost to do something like that for the folks here in our town?"

You know, I hem and haw, "It is hard. There are a lot of variables. I can't really put a price tag on it right here and now." "No, how much would it cost?" "Oh, at least \$20,000." And she handed me a \$20,000 check.

Senator HARKIN. Jeesh, whoa.

Reverend ANDERSON. So we opened the program there. The Roman Catholic and Lutheran Church pooled together. Some weeks, the Lutherans provide childcare and the Catholics cook the meal. The next week, we change. We get retired teachers to come do childcare. So when the student is done with class, the child has been fed. The homework is done. They are ready for bed.

Just about every time we find a barrier for someone who wants to get a job to get a good job, we try to eliminate that barrier just by the pastors, the priests, the Imams, and the leaders of the community just calling out and saying we can really help a family by doing this. When we are able to do that, there is no shortage of volunteers. There are people very much wanting to help.

But this sort of social entrepreneurship does need some cash up front, Senator, and your office has been very helpful with us. And your office has pushed us to create documents so that this program could be duplicated anywhere in the country, and that is an experiment to try to create something new.

Senator HARKIN. That is the other thing that we can do with these earmarks, is find programs that are really successful and multiply them. There are a lot of places that are now nationwide that started out as a program just like that. And you duplicate it, and you build it up regionally, nationally. And then pretty soon, it doesn't take much Government support at all to keep it going.

Reverend ANDERSON. If I may, we received the first earmark, and at the end of the year it was set for, we contacted Department of Labor, where the money came from, and said this is way more efficient than we thought it would be, and we didn't spend all the money and we don't want another earmark. And so, we were able to run for a second year with no additional funds.

Senator HARKIN. Great.

Reverend ANDERSON. We came back and said now we have expended all that money. We would like to expand to five more cities, and that is in the bill that didn't make it.

Senator HARKIN. Yes.

Reverend ANDERSON. It is great to cut the budget. But to cut the budget by taking job opportunities away from the poorest Iowans is bad math and in some ways just plain mean.

Senator HARKIN. Bad morals, too.

Jonathan Keniston, great story. What would happen if you couldn't get a Pell grant?

Mr. KENISTON. Well—

Senator HARKIN. And your wife, too, right?

Mr. KENISTON. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. And she is going to school now?

Mr. KENISTON. Yes, that is correct. You know, that Pell grant funding is just fundamental to us being able to juggle the finances and taking care of three children under the ages of 5, paying our bills, and moving forward. And time is such a precious commodity that when you are going through school it is hard to come by.

And the faster we can go through school, which is allowed by the Pell grants that we have been taking advantage of, just I guess will accelerate us faster into our positions and our careers.

Senator HARKIN. Now, tell me again, where are you in school?

Mr. KENISTON. I am graduating in a couple of months from Hawkeye.

Senator HARKIN. Right.

Mr. KENISTON. And then I have been accepted at Allen College in the radiography program.

Senator HARKIN. Right here. Good.

All right, Dr. Durham, you have got a good student coming your way.

Dr. DURHAM. Indeed.

Senator HARKIN. But I think, again, just illustrative of because you have three children.

Mr. KENISTON. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. And I assume you have no other family support. Your father has passed away. And so, you rely just upon these grants and, I guess, work that you do, part-time work?

Mr. KENISTON. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. That is why this is just so vitally important on these Pell grants to make sure that we continue those.

Now I have a whole bunch of questions here. I have a feeling that many of them are for me, but there may be some for the panel. Again, I just open it up to the panel, anything else that you think that we should know or take into account just listening to some of the things we have been talking about here. If you have anything at all that you would just like to bring up, I just throw that out at all.

Dr. ALLEN. Senator Harkin.

Senator HARKIN. Dr. Allen.

Dr. ALLEN. What I am hearing across the seven individuals today is something that I think needs to be underscored. That the Federal programs that we all depend upon in some way are complemented by efforts at the State level and the private sector.

Senator HARKIN. That is right.

Dr. ALLEN. And so, it is really just not the Federal Government, but that Federal Government support forms a baseline that is so important for the other pieces to be successful. I will give you an example, which I might have mentioned earlier.

My wife and I had the pleasure and the privilege of being the co-chairs of United Way for this area of the State this year. And if you look in those agencies that are supported by the Federal Government, there are also other pieces to it, private giving, and other sources of revenue. But there is also a fairly consistent finding that, despite all these different sources, we came up short and

that the agencies couldn't provide all the services that were being requested.

And so, I think we want to be sure that we understand this is part of the piece of all of these other sources, but still that baseline support is so important.

Senator HARKIN. I think that is an important point to make. Anything else that anybody would like to add to that?

I am going to try to respond to some of these questions. Some may be for you. I just happened to see the first one here was (reading question card), "Can the House kill the health bill by refusing to fund it?"

The answer to that is yes, and we anticipate that will probably happen. As you know, there was a repeal motion in the House that passed. There was a repeal amendment this week in the Senate, and it didn't pass.

And so, we have anticipated that the House, because of the Constitution, as you know, those bills originate in the House—there may be efforts to not fund a certain portion, or no money—usually, it would be "no funds can be expended for this purpose" but then that has to come to the Senate, and we don't have to accept that.

The real question is—what happens—because you know for the President to sign a bill, it has to pass both Houses in the same, exact form—what happens if the House digs in its heels and says, no, they won't fund this and the Senate says we will, then what happens to funding for the Government?

And that is where there is a lot of talk about, will there be a shutdown of the Government, because we will run out of money to run the Government? I hope it doesn't come to that. I hope it doesn't come to that.

The second thing is that because of the scoring by CBO, the healthcare bill, as it is now being implemented, actually saves money. As I said, they estimate about \$240 billion this decade. In order to stop something in that healthcare bill, that is going to cost money. And so, if they want to stop the funding, they are going to have to come up with the money to make up for the deficit or find some way of raising the money for it because the healthcare bill saves money.

So that is just my way of saying that you are probably right. I think there will be attempts to do that, but I hope in the end they will not be successful and that we will be able to move ahead.

I just say this on the healthcare bill. I don't know why we are fighting this battle again. I am not saying that there are not things in the health reform bill that can't be modified or changed. I said when we passed the health reform bill, I likened it to a starter home, you know? Yes, well, you can change a little bit here and add a little bit here, move something here. That is true of any law that we pass.

So I would, if people have suggestions on how to modify it and make it better and change it, okay, fine. That can be a good debate. But just to say repeal it outright is going back a couple of years and fighting old battles again and, plus, just increasing the deficit in this country.

Let us see (reading question card), "I feel the health insurance exchanges are an exciting new policy. Can you go into more depth on them, how they are going to impact at the State level?"

Well, when the exchanges are up by 2014, it just means that any individual or small business, self-employed who is not on a private insurance policy through their employer can then go to the exchange, and on that exchange, there will be several different policies. And so, you can pick and choose those policies that are best for you or your family. There will be competition. There will be transparency. Everybody will know what every policy has, how much they cost, what they cover.

And then there will be a sliding scale of subsidies for individuals, tax credits for businesses and others that want to go on that exchange. And so, it is just going to open up—again, let us say that someone is, as I said earlier, in a job—they don't want to move because maybe they have a pre-existing condition or they will just lose their health insurance, but they would like to go out and do something else.

Well, now they will be able to do that, go on the exchange, get a health insurance policy, be able to get a subsidy for it, if they qualify, and not fear that they will never be without health insurance coverage for any part of their life. And so basically, that is how the exchanges are going to work on the State level.

Now, again, will there be changes made to that? Well, you know, we will see how they work and how they are being implemented and there may be modifications to it down the road, but that is basically how it is going to work.

Is there anything else I can add to that? I'll check with my experts here.

Senator HARKIN. (reading question card) "The President has proposed cutting CSBG funding by 50 percent. This will dramatically impact our most vulnerable families. How does the Senator feel about this proposed cut?"

Kim, you mentioned in your statement, at least in your written statement, that you were working with a certain community action agency. Was it—

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Right. Operation Threshold, which is our community action agency here.

Senator HARKIN. Operation Threshold. Well, tell me, what would it mean in terms of your association with them and what would they do if they were cut by 50 percent?

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Well, our families rely on those—that entity and that agency. For example, they have got—women, infants, and children (WIC) services come through—

Senator HARKIN. Women, infants, and children services.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Yes, excuse me. Yes, come through Operation Threshold, as well as just the administration of their entity as they work to serve the community's most vulnerable population.

Senator HARKIN. Do they—

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Their mission is children and families in poverty.

Senator HARKIN. Do they administer the Head Start program in your area or not?

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. They do not.

Senator HARKIN. They don't.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. We are a stand-alone program.

Senator HARKIN. Okay. Some in places they do.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. In the State of Iowa, there are 19 Head Start grantees, and 16 of them are community action programs.

Senator HARKIN. Administered by the community action programs?

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Yes. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. How many people here know what a community action agency is? How many people know what they are?

Senator HARKIN. Oh, good for you. That is great.

Community action agencies have been wonderful in many ways. First, because they involve local people. They get local control and they are able, to have flexibility in what they can do. And all community action agencies have boards of directors who are made up of local citizens.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Elected officials.

Senator HARKIN. Elected officials, business people.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Right. And participants in the program.

Senator HARKIN. And participants in the program. I have met a lot of business owners who are on boards of the community action agencies, educators. And so, what this does is it allows the local communities to get a good feel for these programs and how they work and what the WIC program is or the Head Start program or the LIHEAP, the Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program, and how they work.

To me, this is the essence of good government, to get it out to people and let them make some decisions on how these things operate. For the life of me, I don't understand this proposed 50 percent cut. No one checked with me on it, and it happens to be in my jurisdiction. And I can tell you, I will do everything I can to prevent that from happening.

I just—I don't get it. I don't get that.

Ms. YOUNG-KENT. Part of the essences behind community action is it is a one-stop shop for our families so they don't have to go to this agency to get that accomplished and this agency to get the next accomplished and find another place. But we have got an entity where we can bring services together to serve our vulnerable populations.

Senator HARKIN. Well, what I am doing is, I am going to OMB, the President, and I have said, okay, what is wrong with the community action program? Do you have some suggestions on how we change it, let me know? I mean, I am all for looking if there are better ways of running things and stuff like that. But to just whack it by 50 percent? I don't think so.

So I am anxious to see why they believe it would be in our best interest to cut it by 50 percent. And I have not seen any indication of that anywhere in my years in Congress. In fact, I think it has been very well run and run with very little overhead.

Anyway (reading question card), "As you know, nothing has a larger impact on our overall health than what we eat. As you have said, there are not enough fruits and vegetables grown in the United States." Boy, this is getting a little bit—"what can be done to make USDA subsidies match nutritional guidelines?"

Well, that is a good question when you talk about healthcare. Well, quite frankly, we have a Secretary of Agriculture, right now, that is moving in that direction. I mean, he really has moved on these guidelines, and that is a guy by the name of Tom Vilsack. We kind of know who he is.

And I have been very encouraged by what Secretary Vilsack has been doing with our guidelines and what First Lady Michelle Obama has been doing to make sure we get better foods for our kids. As you know, in the waning days of the Congress, we passed the new nutritional standards for kids in school. Beginning actually this next school year, we are going to get rid of all sugared drinks in schools and candy snacks and all that kind of stuff. We are moving toward better school feeding programs, more fruits and vegetables in our school lunch programs.

So that is taking place, and the new guidelines, as a matter of fact, that the Department of Agriculture came out with, I think, again are moving us in that right direction. So I feel good about that.

And also in the healthcare bill, we put—a big part of that of the healthcare bill is prevention and wellness, and we have set up a prevention fund, a wellness fund that is going to be geared toward the idea of keeping people healthy in the first place rather than just taking care of people when they get sick.

For example, in January of this year, under the healthcare bill, just last month, any person on Medicare can now get a free annual checkup with no copayments and no deductibles. They can get colonoscopy without any copays or deductibles. They can get mammogram screenings, no copays or deductibles. And they can get a health status, a wellness guideline. Every elderly person now can get a wellness guideline at their checkup that will instruct them about what they should eat and how they should exercise and quit smoking and all that.

Again, that is to try to get our elderly to eat better, exercise more, cut back on smoking, stay healthy. So that is part of the healthcare bill, and that just went into effect in January.

Now I am told that there are more comments and questions. I am sorry I can't get to all of them now. You are right. I think we have—yes, we have run out of time. But to the extent that I have people's names and addresses, I will answer them and get back to you on those. I want you to be reassured of that, that I will have my staff get those to me and we will get back to you on them.

Is there anything else that the panel—you have been very kind and generous with your time and your expertise. Any other thing for the good of the audience here that we need to go over?

Erik, do you have anything that we may have missed? I did miss one thing. I wanted to—oh, I wanted to thank our sign language interpreter, Karlene Kischer-Browne. Thank you very much.

Senator HARKIN. So if there is nothing else, thank you very much, panel. Thank you all for being here, and I will be here for a while. If you want to talk to me privately off the record and stuff like that, we will be able to do that.

CONCLUSION OF HEARING

So the subcommittee will stand recessed.

[Whereupon, at 2:20 p.m., Saturday, February 5, the hearing was concluded, and the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

○