SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Governmental Affairs, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, October 31 and Wednesday, November 1, 1995 to hold hearings on Global Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

VA, HUD, INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I would like to take this time to explain some of the votes I cast during consideration of the VA, HUD, independent agencies appropriations bill on September 27, 1995.

Senator BUMPERS offered an amendment to reduce the appropriation for implementing the space station program with the intent of terminating the program. The Bumpers amendment raised the question as to what the United States fundamental goals and needs are in exploring space. While it is clear that the space station has spurred technological and scientific development unrelated to space, I am not convinced that these developments justify the enormous taxpayer expense of the space station. Therefore, at this time, I supported Senator BUMPERS' amendment. Since the amendment failed, however, we will most likely continue to fund the space station for fiscal year 1996, and as we spend more on this program we will come closer to a point at which it would no longer be wise to discontinue funding. I believe we are near that point and will review this budget request again next year to determine whether eliminating funding for the space station would benefit taxpayers.

Senator ROCKEFELLER offered two amendments regarding benefits for veterans. One involved compensation for mentally incompetent service-related disabled veterans and the other would have increased funding for the general veterans medical account. My opposition to these amendments was not based on their content, but rather on the fact that the funding mechanism for both of these amendments involved waiving the Budget Act. More than any veteran-specific funding we can provide, balancing the budget will benefit veterans and their children. Any amendment which increases spending and puts our country further from achieving a balanced budget ought to be rejected. And while I do not doubt that Senator ROCKEFELLER's amendments have merit, his inability to find other spending offsets made them impossible for me to support.

Senator LAUTENBERG also proposed to waive provisions of the Budget Act in order to provide more funding for the Superfund Program. While I share Mr. LAUTENBERG's concern for the environment, very few Americans familiar with the Superfund Program would disagree that it is in need of reform. We have spent billions of dollars on the Superfund Program already, and the results have been minimal. Superfund has resulted in more lawsuits, more paperwork, extreme cleanup mandates, and few cleanups. This is a classic attempt to throw good tax dollars after bad. Without meaningful reform of the program, I am not convinced that Superfund dollars are being well-spent, making it impossible for me to support this amendment.

Senator MIKULSKI offered an amendment which would have restored $425 million in funding for the Corporation for National and Community Service. While I applaud her efforts to encourage Americans to provide more service to their communities, this program costs $26,000 per participant per year—a level which cannot be sustained in the current budget environment.

Furthermore, I could not support funding for this program upon learning that $14 million out of last year's AmeriCorps funds were used to fund Federal agencies. While the administration claims it is cutting staff, they are actually playing a shell game with taxpayers' dollars by using AmeriCorps workers in the Federal Government. I am confident that the original supporters of this program did not intend for these volunteers to choose Federal employment as their community service.

Forty percent of the dollars currently spent on AmeriCorps is used for administrative purposes by the Federal Government. These funds would be more efficiently and effectively spent on a local rather than a national level.

Another amendment which touched on an important social issue was the Sarbanes amendment to transfer $360 million from section 8 contract renewals to homeless assistance grants to increase funding for Federal homeless programs. Most Americans share a common concern regarding the plight of the homeless and agree that the Government should play a role in the solution. Nevertheless, I voted against this amendment for two reasons.

First, the underlying bill provides $760 million for homeless grants, with an additional $297 million in homeless grants funding available from the earlier rescission bill, which deferred this funding from fiscal year 1995 to fiscal year 1996. In total, homeless programs will have $1.057 billion to spend in fiscal year 1996. The Sarbanes amendment would not increase this funding by one penny. All the funds he proposes to transfer would not be available until fiscal year 1997. In other words, this amendment would not have helped one homeless person next year.

Second, I was concerned that an unintended consequence of this amendment would be to increase homelessness. The bill provides $4.35 billion in funding for section 8 contract renewal. Section 8 subsidizes the construction and operation of apartment buildings, provided the owner agrees to rent a certain percentage of those apartments to low-income people. Currently, 1.5 million units are subsidized in this fashion, and many of these contracts are due to expire. If they are not renewed, many of the tenants will lose their homes.

In order to pay for the increase in homeless funding, Senator SARBANES would have reduced funding for renewing section 8 contracts. By taking away from this account, this amendment threatens to put people currently housed under the section 8 program on the street. The Federal Government has a role to play in helping the homeless, and in this case the underlying bill fills this role by addressing the needs of people already living on the streets as well as ensuring we don't encourage additional families to join them.

Overall I believe we have produced a solid appropriations bill, one which stays within the budget limitations necessary to balance the budget by the year 2002, delegates much of the funding to States in the form of block grants so that spending is more effective, and revises or eliminates programs that simply have not been working. I was proud to support final passage of this legislation.●

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

● Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, on October 20, a letter from four former National Security Advisers was sent to the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Relations expressing their support for the work of the National Endowment for Democracy [NED]. According to these four distinguished experts, NED ''has served our national interest well through its timely support of those who advance the cause of democracy.''

As we make the difficult budgetary choices that will help guarantee for us and our children a prosperous future, it is essential that we not discard those programs—particularly those that are cost-effective—which enhance our long-term security. As the following letter from Messrs. Allen, Brzezinski, Carlucci, and Scowcroft points out, the National Endowment for Democracy is such a program.

I ask that the letter be printed in the RECORD. The letter follows:

OCTOBER 20, 1995.

Hon. JESSE HELMS,
Hon. CLAIBORNE PELL,
Senate Foreign Relations Committee Washington, DC.

Hon. BENJAMIN GILMAN,
Hon. LEE HAMILTON,
House International Relations Committee, Washington, DC.

As former National Security Advisers to the President, we are familiar with the work of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). In our assessment, NED, established under President Reagan as an instrument in

his campaign for democracy, and sustained with the bipartisan support of the leadership of both houses of Congress, has served our national interest well through its timely support of those who advance the cause of democracy.

The Endowment, a small bipartisan institution with its roots in America's private sector, operates in situations where direct government involvement is not appropriate. It is an exceptionally effective instrument in today's climate for reaching dedicated groups seeking to counter extreme nationalist and autocratic forces that are responsible for so much conflict and instability.

Eliminating this program would be particularly unsettling to our friends around the world, and could be interpreted as a sign of America's disengagement from the vital policy of supporting democracy. The Endowment remains a critical and cost-effective investment in a more secure America, and we support its work. We hope that you will join us in that support.

Sincerely,

RICHARD V. ALLEN,
FRANK C. CARLUCCI,
ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI,
BRENT SCOWCROFT.●

(At the request of Mr. DOLE, the following statements were ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

BALANCED BUDGET RESOLUTION ACT OF 1995

● Mr. DOLE. I seek a clarification from my colleague, the esteemed chairman of the Finance Committee, Mr. ROTH. It is my understanding that, in making these revolutionary and necessary changes to the Medicare program to preserve it for our Nation's seniors, we are concerned about the effects these changes may have on inner-city access to health care services. It is my understanding that it is the Finance Committee's intention to have ProPAC study the effects of these changes on the access and quality of care to the Medicare beneficiaries served by the Nation's urban hospitals who serve large numbers of Medicare patients. I understand from the chairman that whatever changes do occur in the Medicare Program, it is in the best interests of this Nation to ensure the health and financial viability of these inner- city hospitals so as not to undermine the health of the residents in those urban areas.

Mr. ROTH. The gentleman, my good friend from Kansas, is correct. I share his concern for residents of the inner cities across the country. The Finance Committee does indeed intend for ProPAC to study the effects of these changes on inner city hospitals that provide the access to care for those areas.

Mr. DOLE. It is, therefore, my understanding that the chairman of the Finance Committee intends to continue to address these concerns during the House-Senate conferencs by including language which would require ProPAC's annual report to Congress to include recommendations to ensure that beneficiaries served by the Nation's urban hospitals would maintain access and quality of care.

In designing the study we would hope that ProPAC would also include recommendations on those hospitals that serve large populations of both Medicare and Medicaid patients.

Mr. ROTH. The Senator is correct. As part of the Senate Finance Committee's deliberation with the House on the Medicare provisions of the conference, we intend to request, and ultimately, include that requirement in ProPAC's annual report to Congress.

Mr. DOLE. I thank the chairman for his clarification and for sharing my concern about the health and well-being of our inner-city residents and the hospitals that serve their needs.

OREGON HEALTH PLAN

Mr. HATFIELD. Will my colleague from Delaware yield for the purpose of entering into a colloquy?

Mr. ROTH. I would be happy to yield to the Senator from Oregon.

Mr. HATFIELD. It is my understanding that additional funds have been made available and added to the Medicaid Program. As a result, Oregon will receive more funding during the 7 year budget period than originally expected under the Senate formula.

Mr. ROTH. That is correct.

Mr. HATFIELD. As my colleague knows, Oregon is currently in the middle of a 5-year Medicaid demonstration project known as the Oregon Health Plan which began in 1994. This plan has had an enormous effect on improving access to basic health care to low-income Oregonians. As a result of the cuts to Medicaid funding included in the original Finance Committee proposal, Oregon's ability to carry out this innovative plan was threatened. Is it your understanding that under the new Senate Medicaid formula, Oregon will receive more money than the State estimates it will need during the years 1996 through 1999 to operate the Oregon Health Plan under its current Medicaid waiver?

Mr. ROTH. Yes.

Mr. HATFIELD. I want to thank the Senator from Delaware and your staff for your assistance in ensuring that Oregon will be able to continue its innovative experiment. I truly believe other States can learn from Oregon's experience, and you have helped to guarantee that this will happen.●

CONGRATULATING TIMOTHY A. BROWN

● Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President. I rise today to recognize and congratulate Capt. Timothy A. Brown, international president of the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots, ILA, AFL–CIO, on being awarded the Silver Mariner Award and the Outstanding Professional Achievement Award by the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, NY. Captain Brown was presented with the award on October 12, 1995, at an awards dinner held at the Merchant Marine Academy Officers Club.

The Silver Mariner Award is given every 5 years to individuals who have attained and sailed on their master's license and who have at least 25 years sailing experience. Individuals receiving the Outstanding Professional Achievement Award are selected because of their achievement within the maritime industry. Captain Brown's labor efforts on behalf of the maritime industry as president of the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots led to his nomination and subsequent selection by the review panel.

The International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots is the International Marine Division of the International Longshoreman's Association, AFL–CIO. With 6,800 members, it represents licensed deck officers, State pilots, and other marine personnel on U.S.-flag commercial vessels sailing in international trade and the inland waterways of the United States, the Panama Canal, and Caribbean, as well as crews sailing civilian-crewed military vessels of the United States.

Captain Brown richly deserves the great honor which has been accorded him. He has been associated with the maritime industry since graduating from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Points, NY, in 1965. Captain Brown continued to associated himself with the maritime industry; from 1983 to 1991 he sailed as a ship's master with SeaLand Service, Inc. In February 1991, he was elected president of the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots on an interim basis and was subsequently reelected in 1992. During his tenure as president, Captain Brown devoted a great deal of time and energy toward legislative initiatives designed to promote the U.S.-flag merchant marine in a competitive world market. Working at both the grassroots and national levels he took the opportunity to explain the importance of the U.S. merchant marine to the national defense and the economy.

Captain Brown serves as an international vice president of the Masters, Mates & Pilots parent organization, the International Longshoremen's Association. He is also a member of the Council of American Master Mariners and the American Merchant Marine Veterans.

Mr. President, again, I congratulate Captain Brown on his accomplishment and for being held in such a high regard by his colleagues in the maritime industry.●

DAVID HENDEL

● Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to offer these most public words of congratulation to a great Connecticut citizen who is retiring after a long and distinguished career with the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. For nearly 40 years, David Hendel of West Hartford, CT has been a fixture at MetLife and he will be sorely missed in those hallways.

As a past president of the MetLife Veterans Club of Hartford/Providence,