

The reassignment of a senior military officer upon Senate confirmation is often the lynchpin of a series of reassignments that moves like a "daisy chain" down through the ranks.

Accompanying one 3-star appointment can be a series of nine or ten other moves. So, unnecessarily delaying confirmation has a tremendous effect on a number of officers—and their families—far removed from the nominee. These families have to plan their moves, their travel and leave time. They can not move until the individual at the top moves. And the individuals at the top can not move until they are confirmed. One reason for this is that the Senate does not want nominees to take any actions that presume the outcome of the confirmation process.

Additionally, it is important to note that some of the military nominees pending before the Senate could be promoted immediately if they were confirmed. Therefore, holding up their confirmation is actually taking money out of the pockets of these officers. Surely, we do not want to require a military officer to pay literally for a political disagreement in which he or she has no part.

If a Senator need to get someone's attention; if one Senate committee needs to work out some difference with another Senate committee; if someone needs to gain support for a legislative proposal; there are ways to do this without placing the military service members in the middle and adversely affecting them and their families.

Each day we ask these men and women to make tremendous sacrifices for our Nation. Sacrifices that no one in any other walk of life is asked to make. These men and women have earned the promotions and appointments for which they have been nominated. We do them a disservice when the confirmation process is used as a tactic to gain advantage in the Senate or in other circles.

Mr. President. I ask my colleagues to understand the effect that holding military nominations has on the men and women caught in the middle and to refrain using military nominations as hostages. I would hope that the Senator will release his hold so these nominees can be confirmed prior to the Memorial Day recess.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH: WHAT WORKS?

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as part of my ongoing commitment to children, I have come to the floor today to draw attention to my efforts to improve the health of American children and young people.

It is clear that many people work hard every day for the well-being of children in this country. However, we all can do—and need to do—so much more. Children's health in my home State of Washington is better overall, including lower infant mortality and better prenatal care. However, immuni-

zation rates and child nutrition need improvement.

Across our Nation, over 10 million children are uninsured. One in four children are covered by Medicaid—more than half in working families. And, nearly 200,000 babies were born in 1993 who had no prenatal care, or none until the last 3 months of pregnancy, despite the fact that we know that averting one low birth-weight baby can prevent as much as \$37,000 in initial hospital and doctor fees.

Internationally, among industrialized countries, America ranks 16th in the living standards of our poorest children, 18th in the gap between rich and poor children, and 18th in infant mortality.

Certainly, we all can do better for our children's well-being. We know it, and the American people know it.

When I hear from people in Washington State on the topic of children's health, I hear common themes. People from Vancouver to Yakima to Spokane to Tacoma worry about kids not having access to basic health care. They talk about children going to emergency rooms with preventable illnesses and injuries. Parents talk about feeling like they need more and better information to make decisions affecting their child's health.

In response to those concerns, you will continue to see me working in three different areas to improve and protect children's health and well-being:

First, keep effective national standards for health care in place for all children, including those with special needs.

Second, make prevention the centerpiece of our national children's health policy.

Third, increase access to information for families to make the best decisions possible for their children.

There are several ways to do more for children, and not all of them are difficult. One way to help kids is simply to draw attention to the people, programs, and services that are working and doing a good job for children today.

In my home State of Washington, for example, we are helping children to be more healthy in a variety of ways.

In Ellensburg and in Coupeville, through a program now running in four counties that I hope one day goes statewide, parents of young children get two important services that help them make the best decisions for their children.

First, any parent of a child between birth and age 6 gets special mailings and health information sent to their home, including information on well-baby checkups, immunizations, safety, and normal patterns of growth and development. All at no cost to the parents, and all for a total cost of about \$10 per child.

Second, parents get reminders and assistance to get the many immunizations their child will need. We know

children should be protected from a host of childhood illnesses, from diphtheria and tetanus, and from polio to measles, mumps, and rubella. We also know people are busy, and need reminders, access to affordable vaccines, and lots of information. This program is a good start.

There is also a dental health promotion effort underway in my State. In the past, many dentists' advice to parents has been to bring children in for their first visit about the time they start school, at age 4 or 5. The problem is that many children show up to their first dental visit with decay, gum problems—in many cases so serious that they require dental surgery—because of preventable causes.

The Access to Baby and Child Dentistry [ABDC] program in Spokane, WA, reaches out to families with young children and encourages early dental visits. ABDC dentists remind them to do things like remove baby bottles at the proper age, and not give babies soft drinks or candy bars. In addition, dentists, apply fluoride varnishes and other treatments to baby teeth, and do other clinical procedures to decrease a baby's chances of developing dental problems.

These measures save all of us money in the long run.

Sometimes bringing awareness to a problem is not enough. I mentioned that we need to preserve national standards for children's health. This must happen at the national level.

This Friday, tomorrow, the National Highway Traffic Safety Commission and Prevention magazine will release Prevention's 1996 report on auto safety in America. I hope we all pay attention to their findings. Last year, the report included information on child safety helmets. This year, their report will focus on the things we can do to make automobile travel safer.

Effective national standards for children's health do not have to be some scientific formula. Sometimes it's as easy as retaining a Federal speed limit, or Federal safety regulations. We know that the 55-mile-per-hour speed limit has saved countless children's lives. We know that the automobile industry has made great strides to improve automobile safety. We know air bags improve safety, and that cellular telephone use probably decreases it.

When it comes to the basic safety of our children, it should not depend on which line on a map they just crossed on their family vacation.

As a final note, I want to remind you all that on June 1, the Children's Defense Fund will host Stand for Children, an event in Washington, DC, that will bring Americans together, to show their shared commitment to children. We spend so much time talking about our differences of opinion. We need to respect our opposing view, but get beyond them to common ground and common sense action for children.

I encourage all Americans who can attend this event to do so. It will be a

day to rally around our children, and show them how important they are to us all. This will be a day of fun family activities, and togetherness, and of the power of individual action.

I have heard from many people around the country who cannot attend the event. I encourage you to support those at the Lincoln Memorial in your thoughts and prayers. I encourage every American to do at least one thing to make a difference in the life of a child, and June 1 would be a great place to start. If anyone wants more information on the Stand for Children event they can call 1-800-233-1200.

Anyone who is listening can make it easier for one child to get appropriate health care. Offer to provide child care or a ride to the clinic, so someone's child can go to a medical check-up or get immunized.

We all can help prevent health problems to avoid bigger costs later on. Anyone listing can volunteer to distribute information on health screenings, immunizations, or blood drives. Lead a safety committees or fitness day at the local park, school, or community center. Help to find or build affordable housing in your area.

You can stay educated and prepared about children's health. Read about childhood illnesses. Make a personal medical history for each member of your family, so you can be ready in the case of illness or trauma.

Nothing is more vital to a child than her basic health. A child must be healthy to learn well. She must be educated to participate and contribute to our society. But we must start with making sure we do everything we can for her basic well-being.

You will see me doing my best for the health of our children. Please join me in this critical effort.

FOREIGN OIL CONSUMED BY THE UNITED STATES? HERE'S THE WEEKLY BOX SCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the American Petroleum Institute reports that for the week ending May 17, the United States imported 7,782,000 barrels of oil each day, 256,000 barrels less than the 8,038,000 barrels imported during the same week a year ago.

Americans relied on foreign oil for 54.9 percent of their needs last week, and there are no signs that this upward spiral will abate. Before the Persian Gulf war, the United States obtained about 45 percent of its oil supply from foreign countries. During the Arab oil embargo in the 1970's, foreign oil accounted for only 35 percent of America's oil supply.

Anybody else interested in restoring domestic production of oil—by U.S. producers using American workers? Politicians had better ponder the economic calamity certain to occur in America if and when foreign producers shut off our oil supply—or double the already enormous cost of imported oil flowing into the United States—now 7,782,000 barrels a day.

THE RETIREMENT OF CUMBERLAND LAW SCHOOL DEAN PARHAM H. WILLIAMS, JR.

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, the long-time dean of Cumberland Law School of Samford University, Dr. Parham H. Williams, Jr., will retire on June 1, 1996. When he leaves his position at the Birmingham, AL, law school, he will have served a total of 25 years as a law school dean, 14 at the University of Mississippi and 11 at Cumberland. His tenure as a dean is such that his title has virtually become a part of his name. Even his grandchildren call him "Dean."

Dean Williams is widely known for his involvement in the legal community and his outstanding performance as an academician. He has strengthened Cumberland's program by recruiting a superb faculty which has added a diversity of talents and ideas. He oversaw the revitalization of the faculty through the development and implementation of sabbatical, promotion, tenure, and governance policies and procedures.

The size of its entering class was decreased by 15 percent at a time when the number of applications increased over 200 percent. As a result, the average admissions criteria have been raised to new heights. The academic excellence of the law school has also been enhanced through initiatives such as increased alumni involvement; the implementation of a broad continuing legal education program; the improvement of the advocacy program; the expansion of foreign study opportunities; the development of joint degree programs; the inauguration of the master of comparative law degree; and the internationalization of the law school by visiting faculty and foreign students.

Since taking over as dean on July 1, 1985, Dean Williams has helped secure a bright future for the law school by overseeing the largest funds development effort in its history. The endowment has increased from less than \$1 million to over \$4.2 million, resulting in 2 endowed chairs, 25 endowed scholarships, 8 annually-funded scholarships, and 6 special funds endowing lectures and other programs. The stature, beauty, and utility of the law school have been enriched by the construction of the Lucille Stewart Beeson Law Library.

Dean Williams earned both his bachelor of arts and law degrees at the University of Mississippi, in 1953 and 1954, respectively. In 1965, he received his LL.M. degree from Yale University. Before coming to Cumberland, the alma mater of both his parents—class of 1925—he served as a district attorney in his native Mississippi and as an associate professor, professor, associate dean, and dean at the University of Mississippi School of Law. His academic specialties are evidence, criminal procedure, criminal law, and professional responsibility.

The author of 9 law review articles and co-author of "Mississippi Evi-

dence," he has served as a commissioner of the law enforcement assistance commission and the national conference of commissioners of uniform State laws. He was chairman of the Governor's blue ribbon committee on corrections; the Governor's task force on tort reform; and the Mississippi Supreme Court advisory committee on rules.

As Dean Parham H. Williams, Jr., retires, he will be remembered for bringing the Cumberland Law School into the life of Birmingham and in Alabama more than ever before. His polished, Southern, and unfailingly pleasant manner have guided his actions and helped create an image of civility and learning. I am proud to congratulate him for the impeccable job he has done and for the outstanding legacy he leaves behind.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Thomas, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION ENTITLED "THE RETIREMENT SAVINGS AND SECURITY ACT"—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 150

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance.

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit today for the consideration of the Congress the "Retirement Savings and Security Act." This legislation is designed to empower all Americans to save for their retirement by expanding pension coverage, increasing portability, and enhancing security. By using both employer and individual tax-advantaged retirement savings programs, Americans can benefit from the opportunities of our changing economy while assuring themselves and their families greater security for the future. A general explanation of the Act accompanies this transmittal.

Today, over 58 million American public and private sector workers are covered by employer-sponsored pension or retirement savings plans. Millions more have been able to save through Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). The Retirement Savings and Security Act would help expand pensions to the over 51 million American