

our children so that they truly understand how the environment functions.

Over the last few years environmental education has been criticized for being one-sided and heavy-handed. People have accused environmental advocates of trying to brainwash children and of pushing an environmental agenda that is not supported by the facts or by science. They also accuse the Federal Government of setting one curriculum standard and forcing all schools to subscribe to their views. This is not how these two environmental education programs have worked, and I have taken specific steps to ensure that they never work this way. In fact, this legislation will prevent this from happening.

The programs that this act reauthorizes have targeted the majority of their grants at the local level, allowing the teachers in our community schools to design their environmental programs to teach our children, and this is where the decisions should be made. In addition, the grants have not been used for advocacy or to lobby the Government, as other grant programs have been accused of doing.

This legislation accomplishes two important functions. First, it cleans up the current law to make the programs run more efficiently. And second, it places two very important safeguards in the program to ensure its integrity in the future.

I have placed in this bill language to ensure that the EPA programs are balanced and scientifically sound. It is important that environmental education is presented in an unbiased and balanced manner. The personal values and prejudices of the educators should not be instilled in our children. Instead we must teach them to think for themselves after they have been presented with all of the facts and information. Environmental ideas must be grounded in sound science and not emotional bias. While these programs have not been guilty of this in the past, this is an important safeguard to protect the future of environmental education.

Second, I have included language which prohibits any of the funds to be used for lobbying efforts. While these programs have not used the grant process to lobby the Government, there are other programs which have been accused of this and this language will ensure that this program never becomes a vehicle for the executive branch to lobby Congress.

This bill also makes a number of housekeeping changes to the programs which are supported by both the EPA and the Education Foundation which will both streamline and programs and make them more efficient.

The grants that have been awarded under this program have gone to a number of local groups. In Oklahoma alone such organizations as the Stillwater 4-H Foundation; Roosevelt Elementary School in Norman, OK; Oklahoma State University; the Kaw Nation of Oklahoma; and the Osage Coun-

ty Oklahoma Conservation District have received grants for environmental education under these programs.

This is an important piece of legislation, and I hope both the Senate and the House can act quickly to reauthorize these programs.

MEDICAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I think that the senior Senator from Texas articulated the MSA environment that we are in right now with the health bill in a very accurate way. But I believe that he overlooked one thing. I agree with him that we have a system that has a built-in disincentive to save or to get services, medical services and health care services, that would be less expensive. I am not any different than anyone else. I suggest that you are probably the same way, Mr. President. Once you pay your deductible and you are in the course of a year, you are going to go out and get any kind of health services that you need if it does not cost you anything. So you have something built into the system.

I cannot think of any other service or product in America where you would have a system built in that encourages you to pay more. I have heard some percentages of savings ranging between 40 and 60 percent if we could have MSA's.

But the one thing the Senator from Texas did not mention was that it also provides another benefit to those individuals because, if someone is between jobs or if someone gets fired from a job, this offers portability. It is a fund that can be drawn upon, or, if there is a catastrophic illness, this can be used for that. It is just beyond me. I have not been able to think of one logical argument that the Senator from Massachusetts, Senator KENNEDY, had against MSA's. I could see perhaps some doctors objecting to it because, obviously, people are going to be more cost conscious and are not going to be getting services they do not need. Ironically, though, I am proud of the medical community. I have yet to have one doctor tell me that he did not want to have MSA's. They are not opposing it even though they are the only group I could think of who possibly would lose some financial advantage by a system going in place.

So I am hoping that we will be able to get this. I cannot believe that our entire health program is being held hostage just because of the medical savings account, something that benefits everyone—all Americans, young, old, rich, poor—everyone equally.

TROOPS IN BOSNIA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I want to repeat something in perhaps a little bit of a different way that I mentioned yesterday because we talked about a lot of things on this floor that are very significant, such as our health delivery system and such as the deficit. But our

Nation's defense perhaps is the most significant subject that we could have to talk about.

I was so dismayed and shocked yesterday when I read what the President was saying through Secretary of Defense William Perry that we now are going to leave our troops over in Bosnia for a period longer than the 12 months that they agreed to.

I am on the Intelligence Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee. I can tell you that at the time this happened, I could not believe that we were sending troops into a warring area with an exit strategy that was geared to time, 12 months, as opposed to events. I do not know of any time in history that this has been the case.

So during the October 17 Senate Armed Services Committee meeting and several other meetings, and on the floor, we talked about the fact that we did not believe it was going to be a 12-month operation. I asked specifically Secretary Perry, as well as other people asking him in the same meeting—one was Senator ROBB from Virginia and one was Senator BINGAMAN from New Mexico—"Are you absolutely committed to bringing the troops home in 12 months?" The answer was always, "Yes, we are committed." It was hard for me to believe that could be possible.

So I went over to the northeast sector of Bosnia where we were planning at that time to send our troops. When I got there and went up to the northeast sector, finding out no other American had been up there, I found out from General Haukland, from Norway, who was in charge of the U.N. troops of that sector, that, in fact, it was laughable.

I said, "Are you aware that our troops are coming back in 12 months?" He said, "You mean in 12 years?" That is when he drew this analogy, when he said putting the troops in there is like putting your hand in water, and you leave it there for 12 months and take it out and nothing has changed; it is still there.

So we are making a longer term commitment than the President of the United States promised the American people. I can tell you right now, I stood right here on December 13 of last year when we had the resolution of disapproval that was authored by the junior Senator from Texas and myself, Senator HUTCHISON and myself. We lacked four votes of passing a resolution of disapproval. Mr. President, we would have had those four votes and many more if the American people had known, and if the Senators in this Chamber had known, that it was going to be a long-term proposition.

Right now it does look like it is open-ended. We could talk about the cost of it, we could talk about the mission, but the point is, they told us something that they knew was not true on December 13, at the time they passed the program to send American troops over into an area we have no vital security interest in.

I am not saying, "I told you so." I am just saying, it was so obvious at the time and everyone is on record and the President is on record and John Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is on record and Secretary Perry is on record, all of them assuring it was going to be 12 months, and now we know it is not going to be 12 months.

As I said yesterday, we have to serve notice on the administration that when they try to extend that time, we in this Chamber will do everything we can to support our troops who are over there, but they are going to have a fight in keeping our troops over there for an undetermined period of time.

THE BUDGET

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, if I could have just a minute or so more, I want to mention the budget resolution that was passed yesterday. I did not like it. I did not say anything about it at the time. I have to say publicly, on the record, now, the only reason I did support it is I think that is the only way we could have anything at all for defense.

There is a very distinguished House Member from Oklahoma, Congressman WATTS. I think he feels the same way, that this is the only way we can do it. It is not a lean enough budget. It is not one that is as good as I would like. But, nonetheless, we went ahead and passed it.

I think that brings up the other point, and that is our discussion last week on the balanced budget amendment. I do not know how people can have such a change of heart. I think there are six Democrat U.S. Senators who openly supported the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution in 1994, and they voted for it. This is the resolution that they voted for in 1994, Senate Joint Resolution 41, and they turned right around and actively opposed the same exact language in a balanced budget amendment that failed to pass by a couple of votes last week. They tried to say it was different. They said this had the Nunn amendment that addressed judicial review.

I would like to read something into the RECORD, just to make sure no one tries to use that to make people think this is not the same resolution that they voted for 2 years ago and then voted against this last week. This is right out of the RECORD, Senator NUNN speaking. He said:

Mr. President, as I noted last Thursday, adoption of the balanced budget amendment to me is very important, but I also noted that without a limitation on judicial review, a limitation which was accepted during our 1994 debate, when offered by Senator Danforth of Missouri, we could radically alter the balance of powers among the three branches of government that is fundamental to our democracy.

So those Senators that we actively debated with, those very honorable

Senators from West Virginia and North Dakota and Kentucky—these are exactly the same thing. I think maybe it was a mistake that was made. A better way to approach this would be to come up and say, "We did make a mistake, I did not know it was the same thing," and perhaps we would have a chance, still, of passing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. Because until we do this, until it is in the Constitution so we do not have any choice, we are going to continue to play this game where we are going to put all of our cuts in the outyears and we are not going to be able to pass a balanced budget.

A balanced budget amendment is the only other way, and I hope those six Senators who voted for and supported a balanced budget amendment in 1994 would reconsider. With those votes, we would be able to pass one and send it to the States for three-fourths of the States to ratify. I have no doubt in my mind they would ratify it in a very short period of time.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. I commend the Senator from Oklahoma for bringing up the issue of Bosnia creep. I am not going to talk about it, but I am sure we are going to hear a lot about that in the near term. Not only is the time in which the troops are there being expanded, but the mission is being expanded as well.

If you remember, during all the testimony when that decision was being made, it was a very narrow mission. Now we are talking about chasing down war criminals, expanding the mission significantly, as well as the time.

I have to tell you that I never felt it possible that you could have a 12-month commitment, moving a division like that into an area. It sounded like you would spend the first 6 months getting there and the second 6 months leaving. So I am not surprised by this dilemma that we found ourselves in.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I want to go back, if we might, to this issue we are confronted with on health care reform. The situation we are in is this. There are three motions that must be approved in order to get the conferees selected, and they are all debatable and can be filibustered. The Senator from Massachusetts has suggested to us that the filibuster would be put into play.

So, in a sense, he is blocking the ability for a conference to come together

and deal with legitimate health care reform.

It has not been mentioned here this morning, but it needs to be mentioned that the administration has a hand in this, too. The administration, for whatever reason—and the Senator from Oklahoma is just as baffled as I—does not like medical savings accounts.

We know that medical savings accounts will lead to an increase of those insured among the young. As the Senator from Texas said, young people sometimes feel immortal, and the cost of health insurance is very high, taxes are high, savings are down and people look for things they can do without. Young people feel, "Well, this is something I can do without."

So by putting a product such as the medical savings account into the marketplace, we know that what will happen is that many of these uninsured will take advantage of this opportunity, this unique product.

The other point I want to make about MSA's is for a large number of people who use them, they will increase their disposable income, because those premiums that are not utilized for health purposes are in the checking account of the person, not somewhere up here in the bowels of the Treasury or in an insurance company's coffers. It is in the family's checking account. So they have access and will have access to financial resources that they can use to pursue their own dreams.

Here we have a situation where the President and First Lady came forward with a massive takeover of medicine by the Government. It would have created the largest entitlement in world history, which I have always found puzzling, because it was right at the same time all of us, including the President, was being told that entitlements are out of control. We have had a report that Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Federal retirement, and the interest only on our debt will consume 100 percent of the U.S. Treasury within a decade. And their response to that was to create a new entitlement, the largest one.

America took a look at that—new entitlement, massive Government spending, new taxes, more intrusion by the Government, more dominance over our lives on very personal matters—and they said, "No, we don't want that." And it went down in flames.

Frankly, there is a lot of conjecture about what the 1994 elections were all about. I, frankly, think it was a referendum on that health takeover by the Government. I think that had as much to do with the change in the Congress. Americans said, "Now, look, we're not for a greater Federal Government. It is already too big."

Then we come to the 104th Congress, and in response to that, recognizing there are issues that need addressing in health care in our country, we put forward a new proposal.

We eliminated job lock to allow workers to move from one job to the