

both Houses of Congress agreed to fence the so-called Nunn-Lugar funds pending a certification by the President that either Russia was making progress toward achieving these goals or that the President could not so certify.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent just to speak for a couple more minutes to conclude my remarks.

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

Mr. KYL. Thank you.

I note the distinguished Senator from Texas is here. I will, therefore, try to stay within this limitation of time.

In any event, this is basically a continuation of previous policy, Mr. President, not something new, but we think it is important to continue.

Our legislation calls for a report on an annual basis on the state of chemical and biological weapons proliferation. It calls for the Secretary of State to work with other nations of the world to try to find ways to put teeth in the 1925 Geneva Protocol. That is the treaty we all signed that bans the use of chemical weapons and, by the way, includes such countries as Iran and Iraq and other countries that really ought to comply with the provisions of that treaty.

We restrict the use of funds until the United States is actually a member of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Next to last, we make it the policy of the United States to continue to enhance our defense capabilities. The GAO came out with a report last year that frankly said our military was going the wrong way in providing defensive capability to our troops, that we need to spend more money and that we need to do a better job in equipping our troops to defend against the use of chemical weapons.

Because of that GAO report, we have included in this legislation instructions to the Secretary of Defense to get on with that job and, very specifically, by the way, to require that the primary facility which engages in this conduct to defend our troops is under the jurisdiction of a general officer of the United States.

We provide a sense of the Senate that the President reevaluate the current policy on negative assurances. And, finally, we provide that the policy begun in the Ford administration on the use of riot control agents be continued in force. This is a policy that says, for example, that notwithstanding any chemical weapons convention, if we have a downed pilot, for example, and there are civilians in the area, we can use riot control agents, tear gas, if you will, so we do not have to fire real bullets to extricate that pilot from that situation.

The bottom line is this act that will be introduced, and we hope voted on today, is an act that continues some very important policies and institutes some new, positive changes in the law, including filling some important gaps

in the law relating to the manufacture and use of chemical weapons here in the United States. It ought to be supported by all Senators in this Chamber whether or not they intend to support the Chemical Weapons Convention. This bill is an important bill to support, and we will be calling on them later today for that support.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mrs. HUTCHISON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, are there any time limits on the amount of time that a Senator can speak at this time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Five minutes per Senator.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Thank you, Mr. President.

First, I want to commend the distinguished junior Senator from Arizona for all of the efforts that he has made to educate Members of the Senate and members of the American public on the chemical weapons treaty that will be before the Senate at some point in the next week. He has shown so many of the problems with this treaty and some of the consequences that might occur if the treaty is put forward in the form that it is in.

I think his bill would correct some of the real problems, such as the concern over the ability to use tear gas. To unilaterally say we would not use tear gas is unimaginable when we know what an important tool it is to safely extricate a pilot that is down or to safely be able to control a group of prisoners, which was done with Iraqi prisoners of war in Desert Storm. The last thing you want to do is have to shoot with real bullets when you have other options that are not permanently harmful.

So, I thank the Senator from Arizona, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of his bill that I think would correct some of the problems in this treaty so that we would all be able to ratify it very happily and knowing that we have carried our responsibility to do what is right for our country.

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORST INDUSTRIAL DISASTER IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICA

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I want to say that I had quite an experience yesterday. I went back to my home territory near Texas City, TX, and helped commemorate the 50th anniversary of the worst industrial disaster in the history of America. That was the explosions in Texas City on April 16, 1947.

I remember the incident personally because I was there as a 4-year-old. I remember the tremendous jolt that occurred at that time. I put a statement

in the RECORD yesterday that talks about the incredible impact this had on the people of the area of Texas City.

Just to put it in perspective, this was a town of 17,000 that lost 600 of its citizens in one 24-hour period. It lost the entire fire department that was on duty at the time. It lost people who were trying to help victims. It was an incredible impact. But the impact that I witnessed yesterday on the faces of the residents of Texas City highlighted for me the rejuvenation of this city, now of 50,000 people.

Thanks to the leadership of its mayor, Chuck Doyle, there is a 3-day commemoration of this event, and it is having a strong, positive impact on the city. It is a city that has put itself back together and made itself stronger from the adversity.

I am very proud of Texas City, TX, and the sister city of La Marque where I grew up for healing this devastating event in its history and for emerging stronger than ever. The area is today one of the petrochemical centers of the world and a place that I am proud to have grown up in and to have known the wonderful people who live there and who have made this city what it is.

So I commend Mayor Doyle, the survivors of the Texas City explosion, the residents of Texas City, and the many other people who worked to make the commemoration of that disaster such a positive event for Texas City and for this Nation.

THE FAMILY FRIENDLY WORKPLACE ACT OF 1997

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the Family Friendly Workplace Act of 1997.

Mr. President, Senator JOHN ASHCROFT of Missouri is the key sponsor of this legislation. It is the Ashcroft-Hutchison legislation that I think is so important for the working people of our country. Senator ASHCROFT talked about it earlier this morning.

I am pleased to be able to talk about this incredible opportunity we have to bring hourly workers under the same laws that salaried, or exempt workers now have, and that all Federal employees now have.

Mr. President, every hourly Federal employee today is given the benefit of flexible work scheduling—a benefit which is unavailable to their private sector counterparts. Federal hourly employees can today go to their manager and say, "I would like to work 2 extra hours this week and get off at 3 o'clock next Friday to go to my child's soccer game," or to take off early on a camping trip, or for whatever reason they choose.

Right now the hourly workers of America are not able to do this because of the inflexibility of the Fair Labor Standards Act. This is unfortunate, because hourly workers, those who punch a time clock, are the most stressed of all American workers. They, more than

any other sector of our workforce, would benefit from flexible work schedules. So the Family Friendly Workplace Act of 1997 is meant to give our hourly blue-collar workers the same opportunities that salaried workers and all Federal employees now have.

So what we are trying to do, Mr. President, is to end the inequity in labor laws in this country that artificially place barriers around hourly employees and deny them the freedom to sit down with their employers and work out a flexible schedule that best meets their personal, family, and community needs, in order to relieve some of the stress in their lives caused by time pressures.

Here is what the bill does. Where an employer requires an employee to work overtime, the bill would give that employee the option of choosing paid time and a half off in lieu of time-and-a-half pay. Now, if the employee says "No, I want the time-and-a-half pay," they are absolutely entitled to the time-and-a-half pay. But if they know that they are going to want some time off in the future, they would be able to say, "No, I would like an hour and a half of overtime that I can put in a bank to use when I need it to take my child to the doctor." So this is going to give them the option to earn paid time off for their overtime work.

The second thing the bill does is provide an additional option for those employees who do not typically work overtime, which includes over 90 percent of the hourly wage women who work in this country. These employees would be allowed to voluntarily work more than 40 hours in one week in order to take the same amount of paid time off later on. This will give hourly workers, including working mothers and fathers in our country a better chance to plan for the future and to get the option to go to their employer and say, "You know, I am working 40-hour weeks here but what I really need is flextime. What I need is the ability to start putting hours aside that would allow me to take time off later for a child's school event or some other purpose." For example, the employee could work 9-hour days and take every other Friday off, with pay, as many Federal employees now do. This is called flextime.

Finally, the bill will give employees and employers the option of establishing regular 2-week schedules to allow an employee to work additional hours in week one in order to work fewer hours in week two. Again, this time is paid, and could be taken for any reason the employee wishes.

Mr. President, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, both the mother and father work out of the home in two-thirds of the homes in our country. So, Mr. President, we know that mothers and fathers are stressed in two-thirds of the families in our country where both the mother and the father work outside the home.

This has come about because many women would like to work outside the

home. That is their choice. It has come about because many women need to work outside the home in order to help pay the bills. In many instances the mother is working just to pay taxes. Now, we are trying to do something about that. We are trying to lower the tax burden on the American family because we think working people should keep more of what they work so hard to earn. Until we are able to do that, to give mothers the choices they want—whether it is to work outside the home or not—we want to give the working mothers of this country every possibility to spend the time with their children that they need.

A key element of our approach is that the time off employees would receive is paid time off. This is in contrast to other proposals, including an expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act that the President and some others have advocated. They want to give American workers time off, but unpaid time off. Comptime and flex-time are paid, because they have been earned by the workers themselves, not handed down from Washington as another unfunded mandate on employers and employees. We want people to be able to have flexible work schedules, without busting their budget.

So, Mr. President, we are trying to expand the options of the hourly workers in our country. That is the key point of this bill. We are not trying to let employers in any way tell an employee or pressure an employee to take comptime instead of comp pay. In fact, there are very stiff penalties if the employer tries to do this. We want the employee to have the option, in cooperation with the employer. We want the employee to be able to say, "It is the stress in my life that I need relief from, without busting my budget." That is what we want the employee to be able to say to the employer—"I am stressed. I want to be able to take 2 hours or 20 hours off next week, in exchange for working a little later this week, so that I can spend more time with my children."

All the polls show, Mr. President, if an employee feels comfortable that he or she has the time with his or her children, that employee is a happier, more productive employee, and it is a win-win situation for both employer and employee. In fact, upward of 75 percent of Federal employees say that they like comptime and flextime, and that it has improved their morale and performance as employees.

Mr. President, Congress cannot make more hours in the day. There are just 24, and there will always be just 24. But we can make those hours more productive and we can make lives less stressful if we give the hourly employees in our country the same opportunities that salaried workers have, that Federal employees have, that they say means a lot to them.

So we want these options to be available to the hourly workers as well. This is our goal. The Family Friendly

Workplace Act that is sponsored by Senator ASHCROFT and myself is for the families of our country, it is for the blue-collar workers, the hourly employees that are working so hard, that need the stress relief more than any of us, that do not now have it, and we think they should. That is what we are working for.

I hope we will be able to take this bill to the floor very quickly. It has passed through the committee. It is a good bill. I think we can work together in a bipartisan way if the other side will work with us.

Until we in Congress can get around to giving American families the tax and regulatory relief they deserve, the least we can do is allow them a little more flexibility in their work week. America's hourly workers want and deserve to choose the hours they work so they can take their children to the doctor, to the soccer game, to the Little League baseball game, or to the camping trip, or whatever they would like to do with their own time. We think it should be their choice.

Thank you, and I urge my colleagues to join Senator ASHCROFT and myself in supporting this most important legislation.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. CONRAD pertaining to the introduction of S. 605 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Chair and yield the floor. 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. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed in morning business for a period up to 7 minutes.

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

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. SPECTER pertaining to the introduction of S. 603 and S. 604 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

THE DRUG-FREE COMMUNITIES ACT OF 1997

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, last week I introduced the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997. This bill, which is