

from the truth. That would be against the law. In fact, I think, as someone pointed out, in one of the Boston projects—102 of the 257 subcontractors were nonunion firms; 102 of the 257. So the notion that nonunion firms would be prohibited from being a part of these projects is unfounded.

As I noted earlier, in October of 1992, President Bush issued an Executive order which prohibited Federal agencies and Federal contractors from entering into these project labor agreements. So the outrage that is being expressed because an Executive order has been issued to reinstate them—as I said, I would be sympathetic if the outrage had been focused equally vociferously when President Bush banned these project labor agreements—as we now hear with this President's decision to issue or allow these project labor agreements to be used on Federal projects.

So, again on the Alexis Herman issue I hope she will go forward.

On these project labor agreements, I think it is important we utilize what has been a very effective tool for being able to complete very, very important public works projects. As I said earlier, these are not just used by the executive branch at the national level, they have been used by Governors all across the country.

L'AMBIANCE PLAZA

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, tomorrow, the 23d of April, will mark the 10th anniversary of a major tragedy in the State of Connecticut. It was April 23, 1987, that 28 workers in Bridgeport, CT, lost their lives at a place called L'Ambiance Plaza, a construction site. My colleague from Indiana may recall that it was the largest industrial accident we had ever had in the State of Connecticut. It occurred during the construction of an apartment building using a technique called lift-slab construction. You would actually construct the floors and then, by hydraulic lift, lift the floors up. Within a matter of seconds, these floors collapsed and took the lives of 28 of my constituents from Connecticut.

It was a dreadful day, one that people still talk about in our State. In fact, early next week there will be a memorial service, with the families and others who are still feeling the pain of the loss of their loved ones.

We ended up banning, in the State of Connecticut, lift-slab construction. There were Federal regulations put out on that construction as well. As a result of that accident, in fact, my colleague from Connecticut, Congressman CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, who represents that congressional district, he and I introduced legislation to create some new requirements to monitor health and safety on construction sites. That legislation would have created an office of construction safety. It would have created a 15-member advisory committee on construction safety.

I should back up and point out that of all trades, the construction trades suffer the most injuries and death. Even with a lot of improvements, it is highly dangerous work. So, even with the improvements that have been made in occupational safety and health, construction work, just by its nature, as one would well imagine, is very dangerous. What we were looking for was to create some specific emphasis and focus on the construction trades. So that bill required those two points and further required increased civil and criminal penalties when there were knowing violations of occupational safety and health standards, and it would require employers to develop specific procedures to ensure health and safety on building sites. The bill was never approved. We offered it and had hearings on it, but it was never approved.

If you, Mr. President, and my colleagues had seen L'Ambiance Plaza, the devastation there, I think most would have come to the same conclusion that I did, that we need to do a better job in monitoring these construction sites. I pointed out, it was the single largest construction tragedy in the State of Connecticut. The problem is that lift-slab construction had caused hundreds of injuries around the country, yet in most instances, on the specific site, the injury, although it was bad, had not resulted in a death, so reporting was not required.

So there was no warning ahead of time about the dangers of this type of construction. As a result of our efforts, you would have been required to report those incidents when they happened so the collective information would be gathered and better decisions could be made about this kind of construction.

So, next week we will again gather to commemorate the lives of the 28 men whose lives were lost on that date 10 years ago. Like all of my colleagues, I hope never to have to attend another such ceremony. My hope is still that we will do a better job in improving the enforcement and the penalties involved, because that seems to be the only way we get the kind of compliance that is necessary.

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise to talk about a subject about which I know the Presiding Officer has a great deal of interest, and that is the attention that has most recently been focused on the breakthroughs in our understanding of the human brain and in the early development of children. In fact, Newsweek just released a special edition: "From Birth to Three. What you need to know, how speech begins, a baby's brain, genes, emotions, what is normal, what is not." I commend Newsweek for dedicating a special issue to this subject matter. I think it is extremely worthwhile.

Time magazine earlier did an issue on education, which I think was ex-

tremely helpful to millions and millions of Americans. I encourage everyone in this country to read this edition, particularly young families. It is very valuable information for people to have. We are gathering new information, almost on a daily basis, about the remarkable events that occur in the earliest days of a child's development, about how important it is that we do everything we can to maximize parental understanding and to provide whatever support we can so these earliest days turn out to be productive days in the development of a child's life.

As we all know, last week the President and the First Lady hosted an important White House conference on this very topic, bringing together leading voices from around the country to discuss the early development of children and how we could better support that development. Scientists have now presented us with hard evidence of what many parents have long held true—have known, I think instinctively—that children whose lives are stimulated from birth by words, by affection, and by playful interactions with their parents and other devoted caregivers are far more likely to develop to their full intellectual and emotional potential than those who are not.

All that we already knew about giving children a good start in life still holds true. Genetics, nutrition, whether a mother drinks or smokes—all these factors still play a role in a child's development. Now we also know that the environment that we provide to children, starting at the moment of birth and into their earliest years, has an astonishing impact on their potential to learn and to grow.

I do not pretend to understand all of the scientific studies. In fact, just the language of it, the jargon of it, can be dazzling for those of us who are lay people in this area. But I am trying to gain a basic grasp of the facts. Scientists have now discovered, for instance, that the brain of a baby is wired to learn. Starting at the very first days, each time a parent holds, rocks, or talks to her child, connections are formed between the neurons of the child's brain. These connections, the building blocks of a child's cognitive and emotional development, grow exponentially in the earliest years.

Just consider this. By the time a child is 3 years old, that child's brain has formed 1,000 trillion synapses, or connections between brain cells. Just to give some idea of the magnitude of this, this evening if you have a starry night and you look up at the stars, you should know that 1,000 trillion synapses is more than all the stars in the Milky Way. So, as you gaze at the heavens tonight and you look at the Milky Way with all its stars, know that just in 36 months of a child's life there are more synapses and more connections formed than all those stars. That will give you some idea of what is occurring in these earliest days of a child's life.

Scientists have found that these connections in a child's brain only survive if they are reinforced, a sort of "use-it-or-lose-it" phenomenon. As an example, and I am very familiar with the one I am about to give you, studies have found that children who develop cataracts at an early age lose their ability to see, even after those cataracts are removed because the brain pathways for sight were not allowed to develop during the critical period for achieving sight. Why do I know about this? My oldest sister, Carolyn, a teacher in Connecticut, was born with cataracts many years ago. She is blind today. Had we known, had we had the information we have today, my parents might have been able to do something differently. She has been a wonderful teacher and an independent individual, but I was struck when I read of this particular fact by what we know now that we did not know then.

So this particular discovery came racing home to me in relation to my oldest sister—what a difference the current advances of knowledge and information might have made in her life. Although she has been tremendously successful with her physical handicap, it struck me life might have been a little different for her had the information we know now about the development of the brain been available then.

Other information shows that a baby who is not read to—the simple act of reading, even before a child can understand the words—that child may later struggle with language skills. Similarly, a child who does not get the chance to play may later have difficulty interacting with peers.

As the Carnegie Corporation's seminal publication, "Starting Points" so succinctly states:

How individuals function from preschool years all the way through adolescence and even adulthood hinges, to a significant extent, on the experiences children have in their first three years.

What does this exciting research mean to us as policymakers? I think it means that what we thought of as "early interventions" to help children learn may not have been early enough. It means that programs for school-age children and even for preschool children miss a window of opportunity, the extraordinary potential for learning that exists in a child's brain before the age of 3.

It means we need to start even earlier, at the first day of a child's life with guaranteed parental leave, for instance, which the Chair was so instrumental in helping us pass a few years ago. Providing even those few months for parents who have to work to be with their children is a lot better than they used to have. As the Chair knows, I would like to lower the threshold from 50 employees to 25, so we can include 13 million additional people in the country who today cannot take advantage of family leave. I am still going to try to persuade him to support this. I hope we will lower the threshold

so more families can take advantage, even for 12 weeks, of the opportunity to stimulate a child's early development.

In short, I think it means for us as policymakers that we need to think carefully and critically about what we are doing for children in their earliest years. I believe we in the Senate have an extraordinary opportunity to help families, to ensure that our Nation's children are able to grasp and reach the highest rungs of their potential.

I have also joined with several of my colleagues to introduce the Working Family Child Care Act of 1997. Given these scientific findings, quality child care can no longer be considered a luxury. This bill will provide \$500 million to meet supply shortages, including the acute shortage of high-quality infant care. Let's talk about the families who have no choice—not the families who have the choice of working or not. I have my own feelings about that issue—but, let's talk about the families who have no choice, they have to work. Or let's talk about the parent who is raising children on her own. The best thing is a caring parent, but if for whatever reason that caring parent cannot be with that child all the time, then we have to make sure that in child-care settings there are quality caregivers so these infants, in the earliest days, get the next best thing to a mom and dad.

I am hopeful, as a result of this new information, we can develop broad-based, bipartisan support for quality child care. We have done a lot on the availability of child care, but the quality of the care has to be good as well. If a parent cannot be there with that child, then the child care provider has to know what they are doing. Hopefully, we will get support on this issue.

Our chairman, Senator JEFFORDS of Vermont, is taking a leadership role in this area, and I commend him for it. I am soon going to introduce a bill that will put us on a path to fully funding Head Start. Again, this has been a controversial matter. We have authorized full funding, but we have never come up with the money. We know Head Start works and makes a difference in the lives of children. Hopefully, we can get broad-based support. It is expensive, I know it. But, we have to come up with a means to do it.

We have to look at our priorities in light of this new information. Whether it is 5 years, 7 years, or 8 years, we need to say that at the end of that time, we will fully fund Head Start. I am willing to talk with anyone about the fastest possible way to do this.

Recently, our colleague from Utah, Senator HATCH, with Senator KENNEDY of Massachusetts, introduced legislation to insure our children and to thereby ensure that untreated injuries or illnesses do not impede a child's development in the most critical years. I commend them for their work.

Mr. President, there are a lot of good things going on that our colleagues are working on. I urge, in light of some of

these studies—I mentioned a moment ago this Newsweek article which I think will be very helpful—that we try to pull together here to figure out how we can support these families, these children, recognizing the economic pressures, all the things that make it more difficult today than in earlier days to raise families the way the Presiding Officer and I may have been raised. That is not possible for many people today. So we need to try to come up with support structures that will allow families to at least approximate that world that existed for many of us—not for all—in a time when one parent worked and another stayed home and raised the family.

I know the Presiding Officer cares about this very much. I have had the privilege of working with him on these issues. I look forward to being involved with him on this one as well. There are a lot of good things we can do to assist families. With this new information coming to us, not only is it desirable, but I think we have no other choice but to act and to see to it that these children get the best start they possibly can.

Mr. President, I appreciate my colleague's indulgence in allowing me a little more time than I otherwise would have taken.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KEMPTHORNE). Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair. Mr. President, what is the question before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are currently in morning business. Senators are allowed to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may be permitted to speak for not to exceed 15 minutes.

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

Mr. BYRD. It will more than likely be 10 minutes, or thereabout.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. BYRD pertaining to the introduction of S. 630 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

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

THE 27TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, today we celebrate the 27th anniversary of the first Earth Day. In the spirit of that celebration, it behooves us to remember how the first Earth Day came about, and what brought it about. I know the distinguished occupant of the Chair participates in Earth Day activities and is deeply interested and involved in environmental matters. Perhaps he also will be interested in a little history of what happened.

In the 1960's, a series of events occurred that shocked the Nation into an awareness of the need to protect the environment. Rachel Carson wrote her famous book, "Silent Spring," in 1962. The country was appalled by her revelations of the destruction caused to our environment by widespread pesticide use—DDT and others, for example. Then, in 1969, another extraordinary event occurred—the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland caught fire. When a river catches fire, it certainly is an eye catcher. Why did it catch fire? It was so polluted with oils and other substances that it suddenly burst into flames. That is, somebody threw a match into the river and it caught fire. Extraordinary.

So in the early 1960's, a Democratic President, President Lyndon Johnson, laid the foundation for the major environmental laws that came later. He signed antipollution and open space legislation into law, including the creation of the Redwood National Park, the Wilderness Act, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I might say, Mr. President, it was moneys from that Land and Water Conservation Fund that enabled me, as Governor of our State of Rhode Island, to purchase land for open space, wetlands, and parks. The improvements we made continue to give pleasure to thousands of Rhode Islanders in the past and will do so for literally millions of individuals in the future. That is a wonderful law, the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

When Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin proposed the idea of Earth Day in 1970, even he didn't know how it would galvanize Americans into action, how it would catch the imagination of Americans. The first Earth Day was a phenomenal success, a reflection of America's strong conviction for cleaning up the environment. I can remember some of the activities that took place on Earth Day where I was—cleaning up the riverbeds where there were old tires and dishwashers and refrigerators and many other things thrown over the bank and down into the stream. We took time to clean our nearby streams, as countless others did. Ours was one small activity in one small section of the country, but it made a difference.

The years that immediately followed the first Earth Day were a vibrant pe-

riod for environmental legislation. The key players in that legislation, Mr. President, were on the very committee on which you serve so ably, the Environment and Public Works Committee. We remember that Democrats like Jennings Randolph from West Virginia and Ed Muskie from Maine worked closely with several Republicans, including Howard Baker from Tennessee and Bob Stafford from Vermont. Indeed, their success was the result of a nonpartisan, bipartisan cooperation. Magnificent progress was made.

It is hard to think that, before 1970, none of the laws or institutions that I am going to rattle off existed; but then they passed in 1970, 1971, and 1972. Indeed, under President Richard Nixon, the Environmental Protection Agency was created. We never had an Environmental Protection Agency. The President's Council on Environmental Quality was born; the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, the guiding law upon which so many of our acts depend; the Clean Air Act; the Clean Water Act; the Endangered Species Act. I wasn't here at the time, but the Endangered Species Act passed on the floor of the Senate 92 to 0. That is the way the Senate felt about environmental laws.

Then another Republican President, Ronald Reagan, had the United States take the lead internationally in environmental matters, and we signed the Montreal Protocol in 1987, to eliminate the production of chlorofluorocarbons, the gaseous culprit responsible for the destruction of the ozone layer. It was under still another Republican President, George Bush, that the 1990 Clean Air Amendments were passed. In addition, President Bush personally went to the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro and signed the International Treaty on Global Climate. So we have seen Republicans and Democrats in the White House exhibit strong leadership. This was a bipartisan effort.

This bipartisanship has brought about tremendous, tangible change. Let us review the bidding to see what has taken place in the past 27 years. Have these acts done a good job—the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Endangered Species Act? It is a remarkable story.

Before the EPA, before all of the laws now on the books, there was lead in our air and sewage in our rivers. I can remember at the time when I was Secretary of the Navy, we took a trip on the *Sequoia*, the Presidential yacht, down the Potomac River here in Washington. I invited my British counterpart, the equivalent of our Navy Secretary, to join us. It was a lovely July evening, calm and quiet, not a ripple on the water. As we started down the river, the propeller churned up the water and it was like going for a ride down the sewer. The smells were so overpowering from the polluted river water that we all had to retreat inboard to have our dinner. That is not the way it is now, though. In those

days, two-thirds of the rivers, lakes, and streams of the United States were considered nonfishable and nonswimmable. Now the reverse is true. Two-thirds of the rivers and lakes and streams in America are considered fishable and swimmable. Every year that percentage rises.

What have we done on auto emissions? Well, from 1970 to 1994, the number of vehicle miles traveled in the United States increased by 111 percent, more than a doubling of VMT. Yet, in that same period, the combined emissions of the 6 principal air pollutants dropped by 24 percent. In other words, we had dramatic emissions reductions while vehicle miles traveled shot up. Lead in the air—which everybody knows has a terrible effect on the mental development of children, particularly in congested inner cities—was reduced by 98 percent—a 98-percent reduction of lead in the air.

How did that come about? Because we mandated the use of unleaded gasoline in the mid-1970s. What an achievement.

The Montreal Protocol, as I mentioned before, has been a tremendous success. Let's look at this chart. The Montreal Protocol was signed in 1985. Since then, because of the restrictions on the production of chlorofluorocarbons—it is now projected that the ozone layer will gradually recover, and return to pre-ozone-hole levels by the year 2050.

What are chlorofluorocarbons? They are cooling agents found in refrigerators and air conditioners in our homes, offices and automobiles. Because of the leadership shown by President Reagan and later President Bush, we have made great progress. This red line shows what would have happened without the controls of the Montreal Protocol.

Instead, we have been able not only to stabilize chlorine loadings, but actually reduce them. That line will go down and down. All of this has tremendous effects on what comes through this protective shield, the upper atmosphere.

Now, what about the Endangered Species Act? That is something the Presiding Officer has worked so hard on. The endangered species are—perhaps—the proverbial "canaries in the coal mine"; that is, when a canary keels over, it shows there is dangerous gas. It gives you a hint that something is wrong.

The best way to judge how successful we have been in preserving the habitat is to look at how the plant and animal species are doing. If the plant and animal life around us is in trouble, that means trouble for us in the future.

The Endangered Species Act is geared toward preserving the habitat. How do you save the animals? You preserve the habitat and thus bring them back from the brink of extinction. Since its enactment in 1973, by a vote of 92 to 0 in this Chamber—not a single Senator in 1973 voted against that law—the populations of whooping