

Office one of the oldest law enforcement agencies in the west. Today, the 1,254 employees of the Sheriff's Office continue that tradition.

Today, there are more than 835,000 citizens of Salt Lake County. These citizens are served by the Sheriff's Office through patrols, investigations, jails—which have held Ted Bundy, Mark Hoffman, and Charles Manson among others—court security, civil service, and specialized services, including K-9, air support, SWAT, and search and rescue units. The Sheriff's Office also coordinates local, state, and federal task forces.

Some of the more heroic deeds have received national recognition. Captain Lloyd Prescott is just one example of the kind of person we have working for the people of Utah. During a hostage situation at a Salt Lake County library, then Lieutenant Lloyd Prescott offered himself as an additional hostage to see if he could defuse the situation. After almost five hours, it was obvious that the suspect was becoming more agitated and that he would likely harm one of the hostages. Lieutenant Prescott then announced himself as a police officer and was forced to shoot the suspect. For this act of bravery and courage, Lieutenant Prescott was awarded the Presidential Commendation from President Clinton, the Governor's Commendation from Governor Leavitt, Officer of the Year from the International Association of the Chiefs of Police, Officer of the Year from the International Foot Printers Association, and Deputy Sheriff of the Year from the National Sheriff's Association. Captain Prescott continues to serve the citizens of Salt Lake County and the Sheriff's Office as the Division Commander for the Special Operations Division.

This is just one example of the many acts of courage, bravery, and simple acts of service performed daily by employees of the Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office. I want to extend a public thank you to all the employees and deputies of the Sheriff's Office for their hard work, service, and dedication to upholding justice and the rule of law. I offer my hearty congratulations to them on this landmark anniversary.

MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES ACCESS TO CARE ACT OF 1999

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to express my strong support for S. 1678, the Medicare Beneficiaries Access to Care Act of 1999, a bill to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries across our nation continue to have access to the health care services that they need. The package that has been introduced addresses some of the most troubling areas in implementation of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, and I commend the Senate Democratic Leader, Senator DASCHLE, for the hard work that he and his staff put into the creation of this bill.

I joined my Senate colleagues to vote in favor of the Balanced Budget Act of

1997, with the expectation that we would save \$100 billion that would help preserve the solvency of the Medicare program. Yet the magnitude of cuts in BBA of 1997 have been much deeper than anyone intended. Present projections indicate that actual reductions have been in the area of \$200 billion, twice as much as originally anticipated.

The unintended consequences of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 have been severe indeed. And while there is a lot of publicity about the impact of BBA 1997 cuts on entities like hospitals, nursing homes and home health agencies, the real issue here is that the cuts are threatening the ability of our constituents—patients who rely on these entities to provide care, rehabilitation, and life-saving services—to gain access to the care they need.

Take for example the impact of the BBA 1997 Interim Payment System for home health agencies in Medicare. IPS was designed as a way to counteract fraud, waste and abuse within the Medicare program. Unfortunately, the way in which IPS was implemented created a counterintuitive and unfair system that penalizes low-cost areas for their thrift by basing reimbursement on past spending. More than 40 home health agencies in 22 counties have closed in Wisconsin since the implementation of Medicare home health IPS. IPS has ratcheted Medicare home health payments so low that Wisconsin home health agencies are losing hundreds of dollars per patient per day treating Medicare patients. Agencies in Wisconsin are not closing just because the business isn't profitable, they are closing to reduce the devastating rate of loss.

BBA 1997 cuts have also been devastating for our nursing homes and patients' ability to gain access to outpatient therapy services. Reimbursements to some nursing homes in Wisconsin has been so low that one nursing home administrator in La Crosse, Wisconsin, informed me that his agency, one of the few Medicare-certified ventilator-dependent programs in the region, was losing between \$150 and \$300 per patient per day treating patients who depend on ventilators to breathe. That agency had no choice but to stop new admissions of ventilator-dependent patients. Similarly, residents of nursing homes who require physical therapy, occupational therapy or speech pathology services are faced with an arbitrary \$1500 cap on their services, an amount that is grossly inadequate to provide the necessary rehabilitation to patients recovering from a stroke, an amputation or other life-altering event. These arbitrary caps on the provision of rehabilitative therapy, have the effect—though inadvertently—of placing a cap on the extent to which these patients can regain their independence.

One final area that I would like to raise is the expected impact on hospitals of BBA 1997 changes such as cuts

to Graduate Medical Education payments and the impact of a Prospective Payment System on hospital outpatient departments. Preliminary estimates from my constituents at the Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association, WHA, indicate that Wisconsin's 28 teaching hospitals will lose almost \$25 million per year from GME cuts. In addition, WHA projects that Wisconsin hospitals will lose \$30 million over the next three years if PPS is implemented—a loss of such magnitude that several rural hospitals in Wisconsin would likely be forced to close.

S. 1678 speaks directly to these concerns by increasing payments to Medicare Dependent Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals, of which my home state of Wisconsin has 44. S. 1678 also includes stop-loss protection to ensure that hospitals do not suffer dramatic losses under the Outpatient Prospective Payment System. Lastly, S. 1678 freezes Indirect Medical Education cuts at 6.5% over 8 years and increases the number of residency slots available in rural areas.

The provisions of S. 1678 are important to ensuring continued access to care, and I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF S. 1714

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Virginia may proceed for not to exceed 4 minutes.

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

Mr. WARNER. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. WARNER pertaining to the introduction of S. 1714 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, 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 ON THE CONTINUED PRODUCTION OF THE NAVAL PETROLEUM RESERVES BEYOND APRIL 5, 2000—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 62

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 Armed Services.

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 201(3) of the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976 (10 U.S.C. 7422)(c)(2), I am informing you of my decision to extend the period of production of the naval petroleum reserves for a period of 3 years from April 5, 2000, the expiration date of the currently authorized period of production.

Attached is a copy of the report investigating the necessity of continued production of the reserves as required by 10 U.S.C. 7422(c)(2)(B). In light of the findings contained in that report, I certify that continued production from the naval petroleum reserves is in the national interest.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.
THE WHITE HOUSE, October 8, 1999.

MEASURE REFERRED

The following bill, previously received from the House of Representatives for the concurrence of the Senate, was read the first and second times by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1907. An act to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide enhanced protection for inventors and innovators, protect patent terms, reduce patent litigation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following measure was discharged from the Committee on Rules and Administration and ordered placed on the calendar:

S. 1593. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to provide bipartisan campaign reform.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THOMPSON, from the Committee on Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 1232. A bill to provide for the correction of retirement coverage errors under chapters 83 and 84 of title 5, United States Code (Rept. No. 106-178).

By Mr. LUGAR, from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 935. A bill to amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to authorize research to promote the conversion of biomass into biobased industrial products, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 106-179).

By Mr. GRAMM, from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, without amendment:

S. 1712. An original bill to provide authority to control exports, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 106-180).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. GRAMS):

S. 1710. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in conjunction with the minting of coins by the Republic of Iceland in commemoration of the millennium of the discovery of the New World by Leif Ericson; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. McCAIN (for himself and Mr. BURNS):

S. 1711. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a deferral of tax on gain from the sale of telecommunications businesses in specific circumstances or a tax credit and other incentives to promote diversity of ownership in telecommunications businesses; to the Committee of Finance.

By Mr. GRAMM:

S. 1712. An original bill to provide authority to control exports, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; placed on the calendar.

Mr. ABRAHAM (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 1713. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to extend for an additional 2 years the period for admission of an alien as a nonimmigrant under section 101(a)(15)(S) of such Act, and to authorize appropriations for the refugee assistance program under chapter 2 of title IV of the Immigration and Nationality Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WARNER:

S. 1714. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow penalty-free distributions from qualified retirement plans of individuals residing in presidentially declared disaster areas; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER:

S. 1715. A bill to provide for an interim census of Americans residing aboard, and to require that such individuals be included in the 2010 decennial census; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. GRAMS:

S. Res. 200. A resolution designating the week of February 14-20 as "National Biotechnology Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. GRAMS):

S. 1710. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in conjunction with the minting of coins by the Republic of Iceland in commemoration of the millennium of the discovery of the New World by Leif Ericson; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

LEIF ERICSON MILLENNIUM COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce the Leif Ericson Millennium Commemorative Coin Act along with my colleague Senator ROD GRAMS from Minnesota. This bipartisan legislation would authorize the

U.S. Mint to issue a coin jointly with the Icelandic National Bank in commemoration of Leif Ericson and his voyage and exploration of North America. The famous Viking explorer is regarded as the first European to set foot on North American soil in the year 1000 AD. Next year marks the 1000th anniversary of Leif Ericson's Voyage of Discovery and this coin will commemorate this landmark event in North American history. This same legislation passed the House on July 19, 1999, and passed both the House and the Senate as amendments during the 105th Congress.

The Government of Iceland is an important North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally and this action would reiterate our strong relationship with and support for their nation. Iceland votes with the United States on virtually all United Nations and NATO issues and has formulated foreign policies parallel to ours. They also are cutting costs at our military base in Keflavík. Iceland has refrained from whaling, encouraged more U.S. trade and investment and initiated a partnership with the State of Alaska. The Government of Iceland has already approved a silver 1000 Kronor Icelandic coin to be produced by the U.S. Mint that will be packaged and issued simultaneously with the U.S. Leif Ericson Commemorative Coin. We believe jointly issuing these coins will help further relations between our nations.

Mr. President, the United States Congress strengthened United States-Icelandic relations by presenting a Leif Ericson statue as a gift to Iceland in 1930 as a gesture of memorializing Ericson's Voyage of Discovery. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson made October 9 "Leif Ericson Day" in commemoration of this famous Norwegian Viking explorer. The Leif Ericson Commemorative Coin in the year 2000 would commemorate the millennial anniversary of Ericson's voyage and would display our commitment to continuing this relationship for the coming millennium.

Mr. President, the Leif Ericson Millennium Commemorative Coin Act allows a simultaneous issuance of a commemorative U.S. silver dollar coin and a silver 1000 Kroner Icelandic coin. Both coins are to be produced in limited mintages, with U.S. Mint issuing a boxed set. Mint and surcharge proceeds from the coins will fund scholarships and student exchange programs between Iceland and United States. The U.S. Mint has read and approved the identical House version as meeting all the guidelines contained in the 1995 Congressional House Banking Committee Commemorative Coins Reforms Act, which protects the taxpayer from any costs. We feel such a coin is an important step in recognizing the important role Iceland has played in North American history. In the coming days, I will be talking to my colleagues in