

recipients succeed, whatever their goals. It is that commitment to Vermonters and the communities they live in that has won the Credit Union the support and patronage of so many Vermont businesses and organizations.

It has also won the organization support from far beyond Vermont's borders. From Fannie Mae to the Community Development Financial Institutions program the Vermont Development Credit Union has received funding and won national recognition for its innovative lending and support programs.

Vermont Development came from very small beginnings in a very small city of our very small State. But like that State, it had very big ideas and has earned its place as a model for organizations providing credit and financial assistance to low and moderate income people throughout the country.

Happy Birthday, Vermont Development Credit Union and congratulations on 10 years of bringing hope and opportunity to thousands of Vermonters.●

THE CONSTITUTION IN TODAY'S CLASSROOM

● Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an important matter brought to my attention by one of my constituents. I recently received a letter from G. Ross Darnell, and he pointed out the importance of educating our students about the Constitution. In his letter, though, he also mentioned that our educational system has not been performing well in this area. I agree with Mr. Darnell on both points.

The importance of education in preserving our liberties has been realized since the founding of our Republic. In 1787, Thomas Jefferson wrote to James Madison with his reflections on the new Constitution. In that letter he said, "I hope the education of the common people will be attended to; convinced that on their good sense we may rely with the most security for the preservation of a due degree of liberty." Jefferson knew if the people were not aware of the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution they would be powerless to stop any encroachments upon them. I'm sure Mr. Jefferson would be quite alarmed at the state of ignorance today.

While it is a cliché that a generation always finds faults with the one which follows, there is no denying that in terms of constitutional knowledge, the level of ignorance is severe. A poll of teenagers last year illustrates this. Only forty-one percent could name the constitutionally ordained branches of our government, only twenty-one percent could say that there were one hundred senators, and only thirty-six percent knew one of the most important phrases in our nation's history: "We the People . . ." These teenagers are moving into adulthood, but they are not taking with them a knowledge of our nation's Constitution.

It is undeniable that our educational system has failed to address this defi-

ciency. Many experts have documented the fact that most textbooks do not devote a sufficient amount of space to exploring the Constitution and the ideas and personalities which shaped it. Even the national history standards proposed a few years ago failed to address adequately the importance of this document. The Constitution, along with the Declaration of Independence, is the very foundation upon which our nation is built. To not devote sufficient space in textbooks or time in class to it is a tragedy not only for students but also for the nation.

It's also troubling to note that when constitutional history is discussed today, the Founding Fathers are portrayed as racist, sexist elitists. This caricature of the Founders, which fails to take into account how the Constitutional Convention tried to balance the idealism of the Declaration of Independence with the political realities of the day, is only abetted by the shallowness of the constitutional teaching in our schools. How can students weigh the competing claims in this important debate when they don't even know what is in the Constitution?

How should this deficiency be addressed? I'm not here to suggest another federal program which would impose standards on the state and local school districts. I have long believed that curriculum is best determined by local school boards which are much closer to the people than we are here in Washington, D.C. Instead, I am today using this opportunity in the United States Senate to urge my colleagues to support states, school districts, and teachers beginning a wholesale effort to renew in our youth a respect and knowledge for the Constitution. Our young people need to know the rights guaranteed by this seminal document. As Thomas Jefferson said, our liberties may depend on it.●

CLEANER GASOLINE AND CLEANER AIR FOR CHICAGO

● Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to applaud BP/Amoco for its decision to provide cleaner gasoline to the Chicago Metropolitan Area. BP/Amoco recently announced that it will begin offering lower sulfur premium gasoline immediately and that it intends to provide lower sulfur gasoline in all three grades by 2001—three years ahead of the requirement for lower sulfur gasoline proposed by EPA.

The average sulfur content of gasoline sold in Chicago today is approximately 300 ppm. BP/Amoco's decision will reduce the sulfur content in its gasolines to 30 ppm. As a cosponsor of legislation to cap the sulfur content of gasoline—S. 172, the Clean Gasoline Act of 1999—I believe reducing sulfur levels in gasoline is an extremely cost-effective way to improve our nation's air quality.

It is estimated that when fully implemented, lower-sulfur gasoline offered

by BP/Amoco will reduce nitrogen oxide emissions—one of the precursors to the formation of ozone—by about 3 tons per day. That is the equivalent of removing 70,000 cars from Chicago's highways every day.

BP/Amoco's decision to voluntarily reduce the sulfur content of gasoline sold in Chicago means cleaner, healthier air for the residents of the Chicago metropolitan area. It demonstrates again that when we work together we can ensure continued economic growth and protect our environment.●

GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON WOMEN 35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, today I rise to celebrate women in my home state of Vermont. It gives me great pleasure to speak in recognition of the Governor's Commission on Women of Vermont and to acknowledge their 35th anniversary.

Over the last 35 years, the Governor's Commission on Women has accrued a long list of achievements in the state of Vermont. It is a vibrant and healthy organization, dedicated to ensuring that women's rights, health, life choices, careers and community service are in sharp focus for policymakers and citizens alike. Commission members know how to use their strength of advocacy to empower women and raise the profile and scope of key issues. To highlight a recent endeavor, the Commission made it a priority to give all Vermonters a better understanding of their health benefits by offering a series of educational materials on managed care plans.

I have often said that community service is the cornerstone of democracy and I believe that each citizen has a responsibility to contribute to their community. The Governor's Commission on Women does just this, by addressing the pressing matters of concern throughout the state, such as poverty, child care and pay equity. For over three decades the Commission has taken on the "tough to tackle" issues. I was very pleased to partner with women's groups across Vermont, including the Commission, in the fight to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. Although we suffered defeat on this particular issue, we knew we were successful in championing the message of equal rights.

Through a combination of their hard work, commitment and vision, the Vermont Commission has surpassed all expectations and created new, and I believe lasting, community partnerships. I am proud of what they have been able to achieve and I hope that others throughout the state and nation will look to the Commission's accomplishments and be inspired to act as resourcefully.

I have made it a personal priority to support the Commission's efforts to reach their goals and, because I am

committed to raising awareness at the federal level about the needs of women, I rely upon them for guidance. From a woman's right to make her own reproductive health choices, to supporting efforts to thwart domestic violence, to addressing the life quality issue of retirement security, I have had the opportunity to listen, to learn and to act on each of these issues in Congress. I encourage my colleagues to forge the same relationship of mutual reliance with any organization representing women in their respective states. I firmly believe that we can never shy away from efforts to understand, and eventually ameliorate the impacts of discrimination, low wages and lack of opportunities.

I extend my best wishes to the Governor's Commission on Women and to honor their very notable accomplishments over the past 35 years.●

CHILDREN WITH BRACHIAL PLEXUS INJURIES

● Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue which affects children across the country.

Brachial plexus injuries (BPI), also known as Erb's palsy, occur when the nerves which control the muscles in the shoulders, arms and hands are injured. Any or all of the nerves which run from the spine to the arms and hands may be paralyzed. Often this injury is caused when an infant's brachial plexus nerves are stretched in the birth canal.

What is devastating about BPI is that the children will have paralyzed arms and hands which may be misshapen or extending out from the body at unnatural angles. This can retard a child's physical development, making everyday tasks such as coloring, drawing, dressing and going to the bathroom, which their peers can perform with no trouble, almost impossible. The feeling in the children's arms and hands is similar to how a non-paralyzed person's arm feels when he or she sleeps on it. This numbness leads to more serious injuries—toddlers and young children will accidentally or purposely burn or mutilate themselves because they lack feeling in their extremities. Some children can undergo expensive surgery and therapy and, though never fully recovering, can regain some normal function of their arms and hands. However, many children suffer permanent, debilitating paralysis from which they never fully recover.

On Thursday, October 21, I sponsored a meeting between members of the United Brachial Plexus Network (UBPN), surgeons, occupational therapists and experts from the Social Security Administration to discuss why so many families with children with brachial plexus injuries were being turned down for Supplemental Security Income despite seeming to meet the qualifications for such payments as laid out in the Social Security Administration handbook.

The Social Security Administration gave a presentation explaining the statutory qualifications for receiving SSI. Their presentations were followed by presentations by surgeons and therapists explaining how children with BPI function and why they feel children paralyzed by BPI should be eligible for SSI payments because of their disability.

Most moving were the presentations made by children with BPI and parents of BPI children. These courageous people talked about their daily lives and the difficulties children with BPI must endure in order to perform everyday tasks.

I want to commend UBPN board member Kathleen Kennedy from my home state of Iowa, Iowa State Senator Kitty Rehberg and Sharon Gavagan, who also sits on the board for UBPN, for their hard work and dedication in organizing the meeting between the UBPN and the Social Security Administration. I want to thank the surgeons and therapists who traveled from Texas to make presentations. I also want to commend Susan Daniels, Kenneth Nibali of the Social Security Administration and the experts from SSA for their willingness to travel from Baltimore to participate in the meeting. I am encouraged by their willingness to consider issuing new guidelines to the personnel in the SSA field offices regarding brachial plexus injuries.

We must work to ensure that everyone who meets the guidelines for receiving SSI has the opportunity to apply for the benefits and be given a fair hearing. I look forward to seeing the new guidelines from SSA, and I am eager to continue working with the Social Security Administration on this issue.●

SEQUENTIAL REFERRALS—S. 225 AND S. 400

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that S. 225 and S. 400 be sequentially referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. I further ask consent that if these bills are not reported out of the Banking Committee by November 2, the bills then be automatically discharged from the committee and placed on the calendar.

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

Mr. CRAIG. I ask unanimous consent that a letter to Senator LOTT relative to the two bills, S. 225 and S. 400, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, October 26, 1999.

Hon. TRENT LOTT,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR LOTT: We respectfully request that unanimous consent be sought so that the Committee on Banking, Housing,

and Urban Affairs may be granted a sequential referral of the "Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 1999" (S. 400) and the "Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 1999" (S. 225). These bills have been referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, although they contain housing provisions which are under the express jurisdiction of the Banking Committee.

If S. 400 and S. 225 are not reported out by the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs by November 2, 1999, such bills will be automatically discharged from the Committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

PHIL GRAMM,
Chairman, Committee
on Banking, Housing
and Urban Affairs.

WAYNE ALLARD,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation.

BEN NIGHTHORSE
CAMPBELL,
Chairman, Committee
on Indian Affairs.

PAUL SARBANES,
Ranking Member,
Committee on Banking,
Housing and Urban Affairs.

JOHN F. KERRY,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation.

DANIEL INOUE,
Vice Chairman, Committee on Indian Affairs.

MULTIDISTRICT, MULTIPARTY, MULTIFORUM TRIAL JURISDICTION ACT OF 1999

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 341, H.R. 2112.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2112) to amend title 28, United States Code, to allow a judge to whom a case is transferred to retain jurisdiction over certain multidistrict litigation cases for trial, and to provide for Federal jurisdiction of certain multiparty, multiforum civil actions.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Multidistrict Jurisdiction Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION.

Section 1407 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the third sentence of subsection (a), by inserting "or ordered transferred to the transferee or other district under subsection (i)" after "terminated"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(i)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), any action transferred under this section by the panel may