

and lasting damage to students. The difference between an effective teacher and an ineffective teacher can be as much as a full grade level's worth of academic achievement in a single year. That—for many students—can make the difference between an assignment to the "honors/college prep track" and an assignment to the remedial track. And that assignment can be the difference between entry into a selective college and a lifetime at McDonald's.

Yes, small classes matter, but good teaching matters more. Our kids can have it all—smaller classes and better teachers. But first, the adults in Washington need to put aside the partisan bickering and remember what really matters—the best interests of American students.

This is exactly what we are trying to do. It is what we are trying to do in this last great appropriations bill: Saying yes, more teachers is a very important priority, but school districts ought to be able to decide that perhaps teacher training is even more important than that, or perhaps there is another higher education priority in their schools, in their communities, in their States.

Tomorrow, when we debate whether or not to add to this bill the Teacher Empowerment Act, we will be doing exactly the same thing, saying we in this body in Washington, DC, do not know all the answers, that there is not one answer for 17,000 school districts across the country; and we ought to trust the people who are spending their lives educating our children.

This is a vitally important debate, and one that the children can only win if we grant flexibility to those who are providing them with that education.

SENATOR LUGAR'S 9,000TH VOTE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I bring to the attention of the Senate that today the senior Senator from Indiana cast his 9,000th vote as a Member of this body.

Throughout his career, Senator LUGAR has compiled a 98 percent voting attendance record. He did not miss a single vote during the entire 105th Congress. Along with our colleagues from Maryland, Senator SARBANES, and Utah, Senator HATCH, Senator LUGAR stands next in line to join the Senate's 10,000 vote club. A mark reached by only 21 Senators in history.

Many of you know of Senator LUGAR's passion for long-distance running. On occasion, a vote has been called while he was on one of his late afternoon runs on the Mall. Senators are not surprised when they encounter their colleague from Indiana in running shoes after double-timing back to the Senate Chamber for the vote. Casting 9,000 Senate votes is a fitting accomplishment for a long-distance runner who already stands as the longest-serving U.S. Senator in Indiana's history.

I am honored to have the opportunity to work with Senator LUGAR and pleased to recognize him on this historic milestone.

THE SATELLITE HOME VIEWER ACT

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I rise to speak for a moment about another subject. I do not want to interfere with this important debate, but I think the subject I want to speak about is important in its own right. I want to put my colleagues and the public on notice about what is happening.

Probably we have all received more telephone calls and more letters on the so-called Satellite Home Viewer Act than any issue we have dealt with in this Congress. This is an issue that flows from the fact that people who have satellite dishes, especially people who live in the country, want to have access to their nearest television station. It is something we all understand. For those of us who live in the country, it is something we want.

The House of Representatives adopted a very good bill that would allow negotiations between satellites and local television stations with a goal of bringing the local television station into every living room and den in America. This would be a great boon to people who have satellite dishes in rural areas.

That bill was adopted in the House 422 to 1 on April 27. On May 20, the Senate unanimously adopted a similar bill. These bills are very strongly supported. We are all getting hundreds of telephone calls in support of them. They do what each caller wants, and that is make it possible for people, especially in rural areas, who have satellite dishes to get the news and the weather from the local station, however far away that may be.

The problem is, for some unexplainable reason—at least unexplainable to logic—in the conference, rather than adopting the House bill or the Senate bill or something in between, the conferees apparently decided that not every problem in the world was solved, and therefore in an effort to try to solve problems which were not part of either bill, they decided to put the American taxpayer on the hook for a \$1.25 billion loan guarantee.

I want to make it clear. This loan guarantee was not part of the Senate bill for which we voted unanimously. It was not part of the House bill that passed 422 to 1. It was produced out of whole cloth in conference when the basic idea was there are additional problems that might be dealt with, so as a result, we want to simply add \$1.25 billion.

When you approach the people who added it, you get the idea this is somehow for small business. But when you read their bill, one of the loans can be as large as \$625 million. The two obvious beneficiaries are two companies, one of which saw its equity value go up 4½ times the rate of the growth of the Dow Industrial Index over the last 12 months; the other one saw its equity value go up 49 times as fast as Dow did in the last 12 months.

You might wonder why these two extraordinarily successful businesses with an explosion in their equity value, as measured by the value of common stock, suddenly need the taxpayer to come forth and sign a loan guarantee of \$1.25 billion to get to the bottom line. I am for the satellite bill. I voted for it in the Senate. I would like to see it passed. I think it is an important piece of legislation. But I am adamantly opposed to Members of the House and the Senate simply deciding to put the taxpayer on the hook for \$1.25 billion, with a provision that was in neither the House bill or Senate bill, a provision that cannot be justified by any logic whatsoever.

I want to make it clear if that bill comes to the floor of the Senate and it has that loan guarantee in there obligating the American taxpayer for \$1.25 billion, money that was not in the House bill, was not in the Senate bill, I intend to object to its consideration, and it will not become law in this millennium.

I cannot speak beyond this thousand years. But I can assure you that under the rules of the Senate, it will not become law before the turn of the new millennium, if then.

One of the authors of this provision, referring to me, said:

I don't think anybody would want to have the reputation of having cost millions of Americans the loss of their network signal, so I don't anticipate problems on either floor.

My response to our colleague in the House is: Anticipate problems on the floor of the Senate. And if anyone is endangering the ability of Americans to get the local television signal, it is not me; it is those who have added a \$1.25 billion loan guarantee in this bill.

I know there are going to be a lot of people calling my office and others. Here is my message: If you are for the satellite bill, if you want to be able to get your local television station, don't bother calling me. Call the people who want to add to a conference report this \$1.25 billion giveaway which was not voted on in either House of Congress, and say to them: Quit trying to give my money away and give me my local television signal.

I am not going to let this bill be adopted this year with that \$1.25 billion giveaway in it. It is not too late. The conferees can come to their senses and take this provision out. It was not in either bill. It should not have been there to begin with. We can have the satellite bill passed by the end of tomorrow's business. But if it is not taken out, it is not going to be adopted. I wanted to come over and make that clear so everybody would know exactly where we are. If you want this bill, insist the \$1.25 billion giveaway be taken out of it. We have the ability and we should make it possible for people in the country to get the adjacent cities' TV stations. I am for that. I am a direct beneficiary of it. Many of the people I care about are.

But the idea we are talking about giving away \$1.25 billion in loan guarantees to some of the most well-off companies in America as a rider on this bill is the kind of outrageous legislative action that has to be stopped. If they think because the underlying bill is so popular that everybody is just going to turn the other way and let this \$1.25 billion giveaway occur, they are wrong. I do not intend to do that. It is not going to pass the Senate unless they take it out.

I yield the floor.

ORGAN DONATION REGULATORY RELIEF ACT

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today to address a potential crisis in our nation's system of organ donation. Last year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) proposed regulations that would have had devastating effects on community-based transplant programs by prohibiting states from offering organs to their own sickest residents before making them available nationwide. In response to the overwhelming concerns of patients and health care professionals nationwide, Congress delayed the implementation of the regulations and commissioned a study by the Institute of Medicine to examine the impact of the regulations on the nation's current system.

The study drew several conclusions which demonstrate how the current system is effective and why the proposed regulations are misguided. For example, the study found that the current system of organ transplantation is reasonably equitable and effective for the sickest patients. It also found that the proposed regulations would increase the overall cost of transplantation in the U.S. Perhaps most important, the study found that the current system does not discriminate because of race or any other factors and that the waiting list for an organ transplant are treated fairly.

These conclusions support the long-held concerns of the organ transplant community that the regulations, which would direct the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) to develop a system which removes geography as a factor in organ donation, may actually increase waiting times in states, like New Jersey, with efficient systems.

These unintended consequences will be felt most greatly among patients with disadvantaged backgrounds. In New Jersey, we are extremely fortunate to have a system that is fair and efficient. New Jersey's unique system of certificate of need and charity care ensures that the most critical patients get organs first regardless of insurance. A national organ donation system will force the smaller transplant centers that serve the uninsured and underinsured to close as the vast majority of organs go to the handful of the nation's largest transplant centers with the longest waiting lists. Without access to

smaller programs, many patients will be faced with the hardship of registering with out-of-state programs that may turn them away due to lack of insurance. Those who are accepted will be forced to travel out of state at great medical risk and financial hardship.

In light of these concerns, the conferees of the FY 2000 Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education bill included language extending the moratorium on the regulations for a period of three months. While this is a very positive step, I am concerned that this moratorium would not provide sufficient time for Congress to consider this issue as part of the debate on the reauthorization of the National Organ Transplant Act.

I am pleased to join my colleagues Senators SESSIONS, HUTCHINSON, WARNER, MACK, SHELBY, NICKLES, INHOFE, THURMOND, ASHCROFT, MCCONNELL, ROBERTS, KOHL, FEINGOLD, CLELAND, HOLLINGS, BREAUX, GRAHAM, COLLINS, GRAMS, LAUTENBERG, ENZI, MURSKOWSKI, GORTON, LANDRIEU, ROBB, and LINCOLN to introduce the Organ Donation Regulatory Relief Act of 1999.

This bipartisan legislation will delay the Secretary's ability to issue regulations regarding the nation's organ donation system until Congress considers the complex issues surrounding organ procurement and allocation as part of the reauthorization of the National Organ Transplant Act.

For the past 15 years, the national organ procurement and allocation system has existed without federal regulation. During this time, each State has developed a unique system to meet their individual needs. Many states, such as New Jersey, have focused on serving uninsured and underprivileged populations. Clearly improvements can be made to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of organ donation nationwide. The legislation will ensure Congress has ample time to consider these important issues prior to allowing the implementation of far-reaching regulations that will revamp the system.

FOREST FIRES IN EASTERN MONTANA

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, when a hurricane engulfs the Eastern seaboard or an earthquake shatters the lives of Californians, we reach out with compassion to those people who are affected. America's hearts and minds always turn to those who are adversely impacted by these events.

I bring to your attention a devastating natural disaster that recently struck the Eastern portion of my home State, Montana. On Halloween night, it seems as if Mother Nature played a frightening trick on many rural Montanans. A storm below out of the Rocky Mountains and onto the plains of the short grass prairie with winds in excess of 70 miles per hour.

These violent winds stoked several prairie fires. The wild fires imme-

diately became uncontrolled infernos as they are driven along by the gusts, in some cases the wall of flames spanning many miles.

The tiny town of Outlook, MT, was evacuated in the face of this unmanageable fire. Unfortunately, the town itself was laid to waste in the wake of the flames. Thankfully, due to the early evacuation and quick response of the authorities, no lives were lost.

Two hundred and fifty miles south of Outlook another town was facing the same fate. The rural community of Ekalaka was also under evacuation orders. A different fire of the same magnitude was moving toward town as it was swept ahead of the horrific winds. This fire spared the community but still left ruin in its wake. It is estimated that ten to twenty sections of good winter grazing land has been destroyed along with miles of fences and corrals. That is between 6,400 and 12,800 acres that producers will not be able to use for winter feed. The increased costs of buying hay to feed livestock will put a great burden on ranchers already experiencing financial hardship within their industry.

Not only were these two communities impacted, there were several other communities in Eastern Montana that sustained damage due to fires. I offer my sincere gratitude to all of those who worked so diligently to fight these fires and save property and lives.

We now have Montanans facing the onset of winter, homeless, without the security of their places of business, and agricultural producers, without feed for their livestock. Just as we unite together for those who are struck by other natural disasters, I hope that you will join with me in support of these Montanans, who lost not only their homes but their livelihoods.

Entire communities have been adversely affected by this unforeseen emergency and I will be watching closely to see that these folks receive the aid needed to rebuild their lives. Montanans have suffered great losses no less devastating than the hurricanes on the East Coast and they too deserve a helping hand in their time of need.

My thoughts and prayers go out to each and every individual whose lives are in disarray due to this sudden tragedy.

COST ESTIMATE ON EXPORT ADMINISTRATION ACT

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a cost estimate on the Export Administration Act of 1999, prepared by the Congressional Budget Office, be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the cover letter and estimate were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: