

for consumers, states, and industry. That is key. Congress should not spin its wheels and push for a burdensome and overly complex titling scheme that most states will reject even if they are eligible to receive offsetting federal funding or are penalized in some way for not adopting such a scheme. The only winners under such a scenario are the thieves and charlatans who will continue to take advantage of state inconsistencies by washing the titles of severely damaged vehicles.

Instead of being a federal mandate, The National Salvage Motor Vehicle Consumer Protection Act provides participating states with a new incentive grant to adopt uniform titling and registration standards. These standards will protect the used car buyers in their states from unknowingly purchasing totaled and subsequently rebuilt vehicles. The authorized funding can be used by states to issue new titles, establish and administer vehicle theft or safety inspections, enforce titling requirements, and for other related purposes.

Mr. President, since this is a voluntary program, no state will be penalized for non participation.

Mr. President, this particular approach was recommended by the Department of Transportation. It was a sound recommendation and I accepted it.

This modification is good public policy since it no longer links state participation with federal seed money for states to participate in the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS).

NMVTIS is beneficial to states because it will allow them to instantaneously share and retrieve titling and registration information with each other. The effectiveness of NMVTIS depends on the total number of states that choose to participate in the system. Thus, it is important to have the maximum number of states using NMVTIS whether or not they utilize common terms. The Congressional Budget Office concluded in 1997 that a penalty-based titling branding scheme which denies states funding for NMVTIS would significantly reduce the number of states that choose to utilize the system. This, in turn, would severely undermine the intent of the 103rd Congress which created NMVTIS and would jeopardize the overall effectiveness of a nationwide titling information system.

I think it is also important to note that the National Salvage Motor Vehicle Consumer Protection Act does not recommend definitions or standards that none of the 50 states currently have in place. Instead, this legislation accepts, codifies, and in some cases improves upon the recommendations put forward by a Congressionally mandated task force. A commission created by a Democratically controlled Congress to specifically address the issue of title fraud.

The National Salvage Motor Vehicle Consumer Protection Act goes even further in the direction of promoting

disclosure by requiring a written disclosure statement be provided to purchasers of rebuilt salvage vehicles. It permits states to use terms that are synonymous with those identified in the bill. And, it expressly allows states to adopt even greater disclosure standards than are provided for in the legislation. In the case of salvage vehicles, it lets states adopt an even lower threshold than 75% if they so choose. It does not, however, establish a minimum baseline of 65%, a threshold that no state in the union has today. None. The 65% threshold would negatively affect tens of millions of car owners with low value vehicles. A proposal advanced by some that would unnecessarily brand for life the vehicles of low income drivers involved in minor accidents such as fender-benders.

There are similar counter-productive proposals that would brand vehicles that have only slight cosmetic and structural damage such as a dented front end and a busted headlight. Who benefits from this? Who will be harmed by this? I want answers to these questions. America's motor vehicle owners deserve answers to these questions.

I think my colleagues will agree that Congress should not force states into enacting standards that adversely impact consumers or titling provisions that not even one state has chosen to adopt. Remember, these well intentioned but impractical, confusing, and unwise proposals have been around for many years. States, as well as the task force, expressly rejected them. No one who works on vehicle titling issues wants them.

Let me say again that the National Salvage Motor Vehicle Consumer Protection Act creates a voluntary federal titling program. It creates minimal national standards while offering participating states the flexibility they need and want to adopt additional disclosure requirements and more stringent provisions. It provides appropriate vehicle titling terms and definitions that do not unnecessarily devalue vehicles or cause repairable automobiles to be junked. The bill focuses on pre-purchase disclosure, helps motorists by requiring the tracking of salvage vehicle VIN numbers, continues consumers' ability to pursue private rights of actions available under state law, and allows states to adopt new civil and criminal penalties. And, it has widespread support.

The National Salvage Motor Vehicle Consumer Protection Act is the right legislative solution to combat title fraud. It solves the problem without creating new problems and new headaches for consumers, for states, and for industry. It is time for Congress to pass this important measure.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, April 19, 1999, the federal debt stood at \$5,624,235,766,178.82 (Five trillion, six hundred twenty-four billion, two hundred thirty-five million, seven hundred

sixty-six thousand, one hundred seventy-eight dollars and eighty-two cents).

Five years ago, April 19, 1994, the federal debt stood at \$4,565,951,000,000 (Four trillion, five hundred sixty-five billion, nine hundred fifty-one million).

Ten years ago, April 19, 1989, the federal debt stood at \$2,776,338,000,000 (Two trillion, seven hundred seventy-six billion, three hundred thirty-eight million).

Fifteen years ago, April 19, 1984, the federal debt stood at \$1,487,346,000,000 (One trillion, four hundred eighty-seven billion, three hundred forty-six million).

Twenty-five years ago, April 19, 1974, the federal debt stood at \$470,921,000,000 (Four hundred seventy billion, nine hundred twenty-one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,153,314,766,178.82 (Five trillion, one hundred fifty-three billion, three hundred fourteen million, seven hundred sixty-six thousand, one hundred seventy-eight dollars and eighty-two cents) during the past 25 years.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1999

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the Water Resources Development Act of 1999. This bill has passed the Senate under unanimous consent thanks to the leadership of its sponsor Senator WARNER, and Senator CHAFEE, Chair of the Environment and Public Works Committee and Senator BAUCUS, the ranking member on the Committee. I want to thank the Senators for their work.

Included in this legislation is a request that the Army Corps of Engineers evaluate plans to alleviate flooding and make other improvements to the Muddy River, which runs through Brookline and Boston, Massachusetts. This is an urgently needed project.

The Muddy River flows through mostly urban-residential areas in Brookline and Boston before emptying into the Charles River. The River has flooded several times in the past, with two particularly severe floods in 1996 and 1998. The 1996 flood was a presidentially declared disaster. It lasted three days, submerged parts of Brookline and Boston in knee-deep water, flooded underground Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority stations and halted commuter train traffic, and extensively damaged homes and businesses. Massachusetts Governor Paul Cellucci estimates that the cost of these two floods exceeded \$100,000,000. Preventing future damage from floods is a top priority for the Town of Brookline, the City of Boston and the State of Massachusetts, and each has pledged to do their part to find a solution.

Specifically, the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 asks the Secretary of the Army to evaluate a study called the "Emerald Necklace Environmental Improvement Master Plan:

Phase I Muddy River Flood Control, Water Quality and Environmental Enhancement", and to report its findings to Congress by December 31, 1999. The Plan was commissioned by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department and issued in January 1999. It presents a solution that has broad community support. Residents and businesses joined with the Town of Brookline, City of Boston, State of Massachusetts and the federal government to develop this plan. It draws on research by the Army Corps of Engineers, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and others to recommend comprehensive improvements to end destructive flooding, enhance water quality and protect habitat. I believe this project embodies the kind of citizen-government partnership that is necessary for an efficient and successful use of federal resources.

The Massachusetts delegation, the Town of Brookline, the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts all look forward to working with the Army Corps in Boston and Washington over the coming months to complete this evaluation by the end of the year, and to move ahead with the work of ending these destructive floods and making other needed improvements.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Water Resources Development Act of 1999, passed by the Senate yesterday, incorporates so many projects of importance to the Great Lakes region. I am especially pleased that so many of these projects serve to reinforce the pre-eminent leadership of the Chicago regional office in meeting the environmental responsibilities assigned to the Army Corps of Engineers in past reauthorizations of the Water Resources Development Act.

Mr. President, the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 incorporates a very important matter which I have considered a priority for some time. The subject is contaminated sediments and they are a potential threat to public and environmental health across the country. Persistent, bioaccumulative toxic substances in contaminated sediment can poison the food chain, making fish and shellfish unsafe for humans and wildlife to eat. Contamination of sediments can also interfere with recreational uses and increase the costs of and time needed for navigational dredging and subsequent disposal of dredged material.

Unfortunately, the resources of the federal government have not been brought to bear on these problems in a well coordinated fashion. Section 222 of this Act will require the Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers to finally activate the National Contaminated Sediment Task Force that was mandated by the Water Resources Development Act of 1992. I am hopeful that convening this Task Force will encourage the Federal agencies to work together to combat this problem and create greater public awareness of the need to address con-

taminated sediments. We also need a better understanding of the quantities and sources of sediment contamination, to prevent recontamination and minimize the recurrence of these costs and impacts, and to get a handle on the extent of the public health threat. To that end, the Act requires the Task Force to report on the status of remedial action on contaminated sediments around the country, including a description of the authorities used in cleanup, the nature and sources of sediment contamination, the methods for determining the need for cleanup, the fate of dredged materials and barriers to swift remediation.

Mr. President, as the Democratic Co-Chair of the Senate Great Lakes Task Force, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight several specific programs included in this bill which were developed through the bipartisan and bicameral cooperation of the members of this Task Force. Extension of cost-sharing rules to allow non-traditional partners such as non-profit organizations to partner with the Army Corps of Engineers on restoration activities will greatly expand the potential uses of these authorities in the Great Lakes basin (Sections 205 and 206). Section 224(2) will enhance the authority of the Corps to work cooperatively with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to make more efficient use of Corps' engineering expertise in constructing barriers and traps to reduce these aggressive invaders. Section 225 authorizes a special study on the watershed of the western basin of Lake Erie to enhance the integration of disparate elements of the Corps' program in this region. Section 223, the Great Lakes Basin Program incorporates three high-profile elements critical to the region as a whole which were developed through extensive negotiations among Task Force members at the end of the 105th Congress.

The first element of the Great Lakes Basin Program (Section 223a) directs the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a framework for their activities in the Great Lakes basin to be updated biennially. Many Army Corps of Engineers divisions have developed and use such strategic plans. Among other strengths, such plans allow greater programmatic coordination—especially among projects conducted for such disparate purposes as navigation, environmental restoration, water quality, and flood control. Development of such a strategic plan for the Great Lakes basin has never been more important than at present, given the recent restructuring of the Army Corps of Engineers which leaves the Great Lakes and Ohio River division as the only Army Corps of Engineers division maintaining two regional offices (Chicago and Cincinnati).

The second element of the Great Lakes Basin Program (Section 223b) directs the Army Corps of Engineers to inventory existing information relevant to the Great Lakes

biohydrological system and sustainable water use management. The Corps is to report to Congress, as well as to the International Joint Commission and the eight Great Lakes states, on the results of this inventory and recommendations on how to improve the information base. This information is crucial to the ongoing debate regarding attempts to export or divert Great Lakes surface and ground water out of the basin. The closely related provision, contained in subsection (e), on water use activities and policies, allows the Secretary to provide technical assistance to the Great Lakes states in development of interstate guidelines to improve consistency and efficiency of State-level water use activities and policies.

The third major element of the Great Lakes Basin Program (Section 223c) directs the Army Corps of Engineers to submit to Congress a report based on existing information detailing the economic benefits of recreational boating in the Great Lakes basin. As many of my colleagues may know, despite Congress' repeated objections, consecutive Administrations have unwisely sought to limit the Corps' role in dredging recreational harbors. Clearly these harbors' value to the regional economy should be recognized in the cost-benefit analyses used in making dredging decisions. For the Great Lakes region, dredging of these recreational harbors will be of increasing importance in the coming year as Great Lakes water levels decline from the high of the past several years.

Mr. President, I also wish to take a moment in closing to highlight the several specific projects included in the recently passed bill which will benefit my home state of Michigan. They include an Army Corps feasibility study of improvements to the Detroit River waterfront as part of the ongoing revitalization of the area. The Corps will prepare studies for flood control projects in St. Clair Shores and along the Saginaw River in Bay City. The Corps will consider reconstruction of the Hamilton Dam flood control project and review its denial of the city of Charlevoix's request for reimbursement of construction costs incurred in building a new revetment connection to the Federal navigation project at Charlevoix Harbor. Finally, the bill includes a unique provision which will allow the use of materials dredged from Toledo Harbor in Ohio for environmental restoration on the Woodtick Peninsula in Michigan.

Mr. President, I appreciate the hard work of my colleagues on the Environment and Public Works Committee in incorporating these important provisions into this bill and look forward to working with them to get these important provisions signed into law.

THE LESSONS OF BABY HOPE

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, one of the key virtues of living in a free society such as our own is that it's harder