

tractors and talked about farmers know that. They know better than that. We cannot pass an agriculture appropriations bill and say we have done our job if we ignore the crisis which now exists and if we do not pass some basic income support package.

Senator HARKIN, Senator DURBIN, and I tried in the midnight hours of the emergency appropriations bill. We lost on a 14-14 tie vote. We tried to get it in this year's appropriations bill but lost on a partisan vote. We must try again on the floor of the Senate, and we will in the coming weeks.

We had a farmer and author testify before the Democratic Policy Committee named Wendell Berry. He has written a book called "Another Turn of the Crank." I was thinking about that today because yesterday's show in front of these polished tractors was just another turn of the crank.

As I said, some of these folks would not know a bale of hay from a bale of twine and they are telling us about the long-term interests of farmers. Many of us who fight for farmers every day in every way are insistent that before this Senate moves any appropriations bill dealing with agriculture out of this Senate, it does not just deal with the programs and research over in USDA, that it deals with the income needs of family farmers. That is what has been at stake in the last couple of days.

Frankly, I am not a happy person to see the criticism that has been leveled by those who do not know anything about family farmers and those actions which will undercut our attempt to help family farmers.

Mr. EDWARDS. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. DORGAN. Yes.

Mr. EDWARDS. I wonder if the Senator has the same perception I do, being from the State of North Carolina. The Senator and I both know that agriculture and our family farmers are in desperate crisis, and they need help in the worst kind of way. He and I are committed to help them. I know that. I have heard him talk about that subject in this Chamber. I feel very strongly about that.

My question is about this Patients' Bill of Rights issue. It seems to me what we have—there has been a lot of discussion about the Democratic version and the Republican version—is an insurance company bill, on the one hand, and a patients' and doctors' bill on the other hand. Will the Senator agree with that?

Mr. DORGAN. I think that is correct.

Mr. EDWARDS. Also, we have such extraordinary medical technology in this country. We have the most advanced medical treatment available in the world today. Can the Senator explain to us how that treatment and the fact we are the most advanced medical country in the world today does anybody any good if folks cannot get access to it? Does the Senator have any explanation for that?

Mr. DORGAN. The Senator asks a question that relates to the key com-

ponents of our piece of legislation. I again refer to this picture used by Dr. GANSKE, a Congressman in the House of Representatives, a Republican who supports our basic legislation.

Does current medical technology and all the advances in reconstructive surgery do this young child any good, if the child does not have access to it, if the child's parents belong to an HMO that says, no, it is not medically necessary we correct that deformity, it is not medically necessary at all? Does that kind of medicine help this child? The answer is no. What helps this child is a determination by this Senate that health care plans ought to judge on a uniform basis that this type of deformity is medically necessary and this child would get reconstructive treatment to solve that problem.

Mr. EDWARDS. Will the Senator yield for one last question?

Mr. DORGAN. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. EDWARDS. We discussed it briefly a moment ago, and that is the fact that doctors are finding it necessary to unionize or to make an effort to unionize because they are no longer able to prescribe the treatments and tests for their patients they know their patients need, in fact because they are not able to make determinations about what is medically necessary, whether a child—if the Senator would hold this photograph up one more time—whether such a child medically needs the surgical procedure the Senator talked about in the last few minutes, the fact that doctors find it necessary to unionize in order to do what they have spent their entire lives being trained to do, which is to provide the best possible medical care to their patients. Can the Senator imagine a more powerful indication and symptom of the medical crisis confronting this country today?

Mr. DORGAN. I cannot. The Senator makes a point with his question. This is real trouble for a lot of patients, and what we are trying to do and say is health care is changing and patients ought to have rights. That is what our Patients' Bill of Rights does. It empowers patients and allows them to believe that if they are covered with health care through their HMO, there will be some basic guarantees that just, prudent people expect would be there anyway but which we have now seen in recent years by some HMOs have systematically been denied patients.

Let me make one final point. Not always, but too often health care treatment has become a function of profit and loss for some corporations. Look at their executives. Find how much money they are making in this industry. Then they say: But we can't afford to provide emergency room care for someone who is unconscious and presents himself on a gurney to emergency room workers, or we can't help this young child with a facial deformity which clearly needs attention. We can't help a child in a wheelchair who

has a 50-percent chance of walking and told you don't get the therapy because a 50-percent chance of walking by age 5 is insignificant.

We are saying those are not medical judgments made by a doctor. Those are insurance judgments made by HMO accountants 1,000 miles away, and they undercut the very premise of this health care system in which we ought to expect prudent treatment that a doctor believes is necessary for a patient. Yet in too many instances, they are not getting it. This is not just a consumer bill or a patients' bill, it is a bill that really gets at the root of health care in this country. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, my colleague from North Carolina has 3 minutes. I wonder if he can speak, and I ask unanimous consent I follow him and Senator BOXER follow me.

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

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. EDWARDS. I thank the Senator.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL HOOKER, CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, I rise today to note with sadness the death this morning of the Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Michael Hooker.

Chancellor Hooker was a friend and someone whom I have known for a number of years. He was a man of vision, enthusiasm, energy, brilliance, and he had an extraordinary love for the State of North Carolina.

His passing is not only a loss for those of us in the University of North Carolina family, but for all North Carolinians. By making a great university better, Michael Hooker made a lasting contribution to our entire State.

The truth is that his death was both a shock and a blow. Just yesterday he was at work in Chapel Hill.

He was diagnosed this year with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and had been undergoing treatments at the National Cancer Institute in Maryland and also at the UNC Hospitals.

While he was up here, I had the pleasure of seeing him a few times. Not too long ago, I ran into him and his wonderful wife Carmen, who is an extraordinary woman, right outside the Senate Chamber. He looked well and was feeling optimistic at that time about his health. He did take a brief leave from his job for treatment of the disease, but for most of the year, he was hard at work.

I cannot say how sad I felt to learn this morning the news that his cancer had grown worse and that it took him at an early age—at the age of 53. My thoughts and prayers go out to Carmen, his wonderful wife, and to their children.

Let me tell you, Mr. President, just a little more about Chancellor Hooker and what he has done for my State of North Carolina.

He was the first person in his family to get a college degree—a philosophy degree from Chapel Hill in 1969. His father was a coal miner. He always credited his parents' belief in hard work and good education for his own success.

After graduation, he left North Carolina to get a graduate degree and to enter the world of academics. He taught philosophy at Harvard. He was president of Bennington College and also president of the University of Massachusetts system. He was president of the University of Maryland at Baltimore County.

He returned to North Carolina in July of 1995 to become UNC's eighth chancellor. And he really attacked the job. One year he visited every single county in North Carolina—and we have 100 counties in North Carolina—to make sure that every person in the State knew they were connected with their university. Then he made sure that the faculty and administration at UNC were connected to the State. He once took the new faculty and administrators from other States on a week-long bus tour of North Carolina.

The truth of the matter is that men like Michael Hooker have long lists of accomplishments. They serve on many blue ribbon panels; they get lots of honorary degrees; they write great scholarly pieces; they are placed on many "best of" lists. I could go through a great deal of these with respect to Chancellor Hooker, because he accomplished all of those things.

But in the end, I think Michael Hooker himself valued people most. I believe he would like to be remembered for all of the things he did to make people's lives better. He understood the need for education, not only because it expands men's and women's minds but because it makes our society better, stronger, more prosperous, and more equitable. He was an extraordinary and wonderful man.

He said it best himself, if I could just quote him:

There is only one reason to have a public university, and that is to serve the people of the state. That should be the touchstone of everything we do: whether it's in the interest of North Carolina and our citizens. Our litmus test is the question: Is what we do in Chapel Hill helping the factory worker in Kannapolis?

The best tribute we can give him is all the good works performed in the future by those who were touched by him and his life. Chancellor Hooker was an extraordinary man. He will be missed by me, he will be missed by every single citizen in North Carolina, and he will be missed by all those who knew him.

With that, I yield the floor, Mr. President.

Mr. WELLSTONE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Let me just thank the Senator from North Carolina. Having been an undergraduate at the University of North Carolina, having done my doctorate work there, having had two children born in Chapel Hill, and having known Chancellor Hooker, I am also very sorry to hear of his death—a very young man. It is really a loss for North Carolina and the country. I appreciate the Senator's eloquence.

There are other Senators on the floor, so I am going to try to be brief and take only an hour or so—less than that, much less than that.

THE FARM CRISIS

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, first of all, coming from an agricultural State, I just want to, as I think Richard Nixon would say, make one thing "perfectly clear" about agriculture.

Senator DORGAN is right on the mark when he makes the point. It is sort of an inside thing, but it is very important to the outsiders, especially to farmers, and not just to farmers but to those of us who come from farm States. If yesterday the majority leader had been successful on the cloture vote, we would not have been able to bring this amendment to the floor on this ag bill that calls for an additional \$6.5 billion of assistance.

Let me just say that this ag appropriations bill that just funds existing USDA programs will not do the job. Let me also say, in my State of Minnesota, and I will not talk about a lot of statistics that I could talk about farm income having dropped 40 percent over the last several years. I could talk about this last decade where farmers have been wondering why they see a 35-percent drop in price, and yet the consumer price goes up while the farm-retail spread grows wider and wider between what farmers make and consumers pay. We want to know what is going on. Let me just tell you, in my State there are a lot of broken lives and a lot of broken dreams and a lot of broken families.

Let me also just simply say that time is not neutral; time moves on. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. If we do not get this additional assistance to farmers, much of it directly related to income loss because of record low prices, then a lot of farmers are not going to be able to live to farm another day.

We have to get this assistance to farmers. It has to be in this ag appropriations bill. I will tell you something. I do not even like coming out here and fighting for additional bailout for farmers or additional credit assistance, because most of the farmers in North Carolina and Minnesota, and around the country, are not interested in bailout money. They are interested in being able to get a decent price. That's what they are interested in.

Let me go on. Let me say, again, this appropriations bill will be an appro-

priations bill that will really help. This amendment calls for this additional \$6.5 billion in assistance.

Second point: I do not know what the press conference was about here in Washington. I was back home with a lot of farmers. There were a lot of people from all around the State who came together for a gathering at the capital. But I will tell you this. I hope that some of the folks who held the press conference also talked about how we can make sure that family farms have a future several years from now. I think we have to speak the truth. And the truth of the matter is, this Freedom to Farm bill of 1996 is a freedom to fail bill.

The fundamental crisis is a crisis of price. Right now our corn growers get \$1.75 at the local elevator; our wheat growers get \$3.13 for wheat. This is nowhere near the cost of production. They cannot cash flow. They cannot make a living. Unless we fix this freedom to fail bill and we go back to some sort of leverage for farmers in the marketplace, some kind of safety net which will give them a decent income, some sort of price stability, our family farmers do not have any future. That is what this is all about.

I am not interested in semantics. If people want to say, I am still for the Freedom to Farm bill, I don't care. But I will say this. The flexibility in that legislation to farm a whole lot of different crops does not do any good if there are record low prices for all of them. So let's get the assistance to people so they can survive.

But let's get beyond the short run, and let's be honest with one another. Let's fix that Freedom to Farm, or freedom to fail, bill, and let's make sure there is some price stability and there is some farm income out there; otherwise, our family farmers have no future.

Finally, if there was a press conference yesterday, I sure as heck hope there was some focus on the distortions in the market. I would like to join all my Republican colleagues in calling for putting free enterprise back into the food industry. I would like to join with all of my Republican colleagues in being a true Adam Smith apostle and calling for a market economy. I would like to join with all my Republican colleagues, in other words, in calling for some antitrust action.

How in the world can our family farmers make it when you have four large firms, the packers dominating the livestock farmers, the grain companies dominating the grain farmers? There has to be some fair competition. Everywhere our family farmers turn, whether it is from whom they buy or to whom they sell, we do not have the competition.

Let's really be on the side of these family farmers and insist on some competition. Let's have the courage to take on some of these conglomerates that have muscled their way to the dinner table exercising their raw political power over our producers and over