

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

GRADUATING PAGES

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the spring 2000 graduating Page class. They have been an integral part of the everyday proceedings of the U.S. Senate and without their hard work and dedication this deliberative body would not be able to complete our work in a timely manner. Throughout the year young men and women come to Washington, D.C. from all parts of the nation to serve a vital role as Pages in the U.S. Senate. During the spring and fall these high school students attend the Page School in the early mornings and continue their day as U.S. Senate Pages often working long days and into the night. I must say, this group of Pages was of the highest caliber and are among the best youth our Nation has to offer. At this time, I would like to commend them for their service and enter their names in the RECORD.

Shannon Coe, Ashley Burnett, Kelly Morgan, Shannon Montague, Emily Schlect, Loki Gale Tobin, Kyle Brown, Misty Lebatard, Clinton Lee Johnson Jr., Chase Dubay, Benton Keatley, Anjel Jefferson, Nicole Tailleart, Rebecca Manning, Jean-Paul Isabelle, Andriea Aden, Seema Mittal, James Dolan, Nathaniel Haefel, Hannah Pierson-Compeau, Jay Oliphant, Allison Conley, Megan Gilbert.

MANDATING DISCLOSURE BY SECTION 527 ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first, I commend Senators LIEBERMAN, MCCAIN, FEINGOLD, DASCHLE and LEVIN for all of their hard work on the issue of Section 527 organizations. This latest mutation in fundraising is just another example of the failure of our existing campaign finance laws.

Hopefully, the passage of our amendment yesterday, which mandates disclosure by Section 527 organizations, will close yet another legal loophole being exploited by clever campaign fundraisers. This amendment should make unregulated and unlimited contributions to these so-called Section 527 committees much less attractive. Although donors will be able to continue to make as many tax-deductible contributions as they want, they will no longer be able to do so in absolute secrecy.

These Section 527 organizations, named after a section of the tax code, skirt existing campaign finance laws by carefully avoiding the endorsement of any particular candidate. This convoluted reasoning proceeds as follows: if a Section 527 committee does not en-

dorse a particular candidate, then it is not engaged in political activity; if it is not engaged in political activity, then there is no requirement for it to disclose who has contributed money to the committee; since it is not engaged in political activity, it can run unlimited issue ads without obeying existing campaign finance laws regarding disclosure.

We all know from past experience that it is just a matter of time before enormous amounts of campaign cash are funneled through more and more of these secret organizations. The amendment which passed yesterday, which I was pleased to cosponsor, will force Section 527 organizations to emerge from the shadows. They will be required to disclose their existence to the IRS, file publicly available tax returns, make public reports specifying annual expenditures over \$500, and identify those making contributions of \$200 or more a year to the organization.

Although disclosure is only part of the solution, the passage of this amendment ensures that the public understands who these committees are, who gives them their money, and how they spend that money. I was pleased to give it my support.

ACCESS TO INNOVATION FOR MEDICARE PATIENTS ACT OF 2000

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I think we all recognize that the Medicare Program is outdated. The bill introduced by the Senator from Washington would modernize Medicare's coverage to include new biotechnology innovations. Currently, the Medicare program covers physician-administered therapies that are given in an office by infusion or injection, but not those that are injected by a patient or a caregiver at home. Biotechnology has brought us new innovative biologics that are made with large proteins that are so unlike other drugs that they must be formulated as injectables. Science has allowed us to make many of these new products in the form of simple injections that do not have to be given by a health care professional in a clinical setting.

The bill I have cosponsored today would bring Medicare up to date with these developments by ensuring that new biological therapies are available to Medicare beneficiaries. It just does not make sense to continue Medicare's bias toward treatments that are more expensive and less convenient for patients.

I would like to add one point about the bill's cost. We do not know yet what the Congressional Budget Office [CBO] will determine the estimated cost of this change in Medicare policy will be. I understand the cosponsors of this legislation have requested an estimate from CBO. An analysis by the Lewin Group found that this legislation would not result in increasing the cost to the Medicare program. This finding is not surprising given that the

bill would reduce certain costs, such as physician office visits and other expensive services, which would no longer be needed. I am hopeful that the CBO will reach the same conclusion. While it is important to modernize Medicare, it is equally important that we do so in a way that does not weaken the financial strength of the program.

I commend Senator GORTON for his leadership on this legislation. It represents the kind of constructive reform that is needed in the Medicare program; reform that would advance and modernize Medicare without imposing additional costs to the program.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL VALMORO III

• Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the distinguished career of an outstanding American, Mr. Michael Valmoro of Mahwah, New Jersey. Serving his community as a teacher of English, world literature and the works of William Shakespeare at Teaneck High School for the past thirty-eight years, he is one of the longest serving teachers in the history of the New Jersey school system. That tremendous achievement alone is worthy of praise. However, his commitment to his students by opening their young minds to the world's great literature and the genius of William Shakespeare has made him a respected educator and pillar of the community.

Cicero once professed, "What nobler employment, or more valuable to the state, than that of the man who instructs the rising generation." It is clear that Mr. Valmoro has taken Cicero's wisdom to heart during the course of the last four decades, as he has enlightened and inspired the thousands of students fortunate enough to have passed through his classroom.

Whether he was teaching his students to express themselves through creative writing, introducing them to the tragedy of "Romeo and Juliet" or reveling in the simple joy found in one of Shakespeare's sonnets, Mr. Valmoro approached each of his lessons with the wisdom and perspective of a scholar and the unbridled enthusiasm of an eager student.

In one of the scenes of "King Lear," the titular monarch asks his audience, "Who is it who can tell me who I am?" This question often presents itself to an individual upon the twilight of their career. If the outpouring of accolades, fond reminiscence and affection are any indication, the answer to this probing question for Mr. Valmoro is, an excellent teacher, a trusted mentor, a lover of great literature and an inspiration to his colleagues, students and family.

Throughout his distinguished tenure, Mr. Valmoro has exemplified the ideals which the American people value in their educators. It is with my most sincere congratulations and respect that I recognize him today in the Senate. •