

Whereas that vessel, the U.S.S. Lexington (CV-2), also known as the "Fighting Lady", saw active service from 1927 until lost in 1942 during the historic Battle of the Coral Sea;

Whereas immediately after that loss, President Franklin D. Roosevelt saw fit to bestow the name "Lexington" on a successor aircraft carrier in order to carry on the fighting spirit to preserve freedom;

Whereas that successor aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Lexington (CV-16), joined the fleet in 1943 and earned 11 battle stars during the Pacific campaigns of World War II as she helped carry the fight to the enemy;

Whereas the U.S.S. Lexington (CV-16) continued her service to the United States after World War II, conducting numerous deployments during the Cold War and completing her 48 years of service as a training aircraft carrier for student aviators; and

Whereas upon the completion of her service and in keeping with the traditions of the Navy, the U.S.S. Lexington (CV-16) was stricken from the Navy Vessel Register on November 30, 1991: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that the aircraft carrier CVN-77 should be named the U.S.S. Lexington—

(1) in order to honor the men and women who served in the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II, and the incalculable number of United States citizens on the home front during that war, who mobilized in the name of freedom, and who are today respectfully referred to as the "Greatest Generation"; and

(2) as a special tribute to the 16,000,000 veterans of the Armed Forces who served on land, sea, and air during World War II, of whom less than 6,000,000 remain alive today, and serve as a lasting symbol of commitment to freedom as they pass on and proudly take their place in history.

SENATE RESOLUTION 259—URGING THE DECOMMISSIONING OF ARMS AND EXPLOSIVES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Mr. HELMS (for himself and Mr. SMITH of Oregon) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 259

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement was signed on April 10, 1998, to bring about a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Northern Ireland;

Whereas in a referendum on May 22, 1998, the people of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement provides for the devolution of government from the United Kingdom to local institutions in Northern Ireland and the establishment of a North/South Ministerial Council and a British-Irish Council, and consists of provisions on decommissioning, human rights, policing, and prisoners;

Whereas much progress has been made in the establishment of both the indigenous Northern Ireland institutions and the North/South and British-Irish bodies, hundreds of prisoners from both communities have been released, and a plan for the restructuring of the police force has been put forth;

Whereas the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (the Commission), led by General John de Chastelain, was established to facilitate the process of decommissioning of paramilitary arms as called for in the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas the two principal loyalist paramilitary organizations, the Ulster Volunteer

Force (UVF) and the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), informed the Commission that they are prepared to move on decommissioning if the Irish Republican Army (IRA) makes clear that the war is over and it will also decommission;

Whereas the Commission's January 31, 2000, report on decommissioning states that though the IRA emphasized that it poses no threat to the peace process, it has not provided any information as to when decommissioning will begin;

Whereas the leader of the Social Democratic and Labor Party, John Hume, has called upon the IRA to "demonstrate for all to see its patriotism and desire to move the situation forward by strengthening the peace process through beginning voluntarily the process of decommissioning";

Whereas on February 11, 2000, due to the decommissioning impasse, the British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Peter Mandelson, suspended the Northern Ireland Executive and resumed direct control over the province;

Whereas on February 11, 2000, the Commission issued a report noting the "IRA's recognition that the issue of arms needs to be dealt with in an acceptable way and that this is a necessary objective of a genuine peace process"; and

Whereas recent polls indicate that the overwhelming majority of the people in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland support decommissioning by all paramilitary organizations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) stresses the importance of decommissioning of weapons held by paramilitaries on all sides without conditions to the success of the peace process in Northern Ireland;

(2) calls upon the Irish Republican Army to make a firm commitment and offer a specific timetable as to when decommissioning of all of their arms and explosives will begin; and

(3) urges the loyalist paramilitary organizations to respond to such an IRA proposal by immediately beginning the process of decommissioning all of their weapons.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I am certainly not alone in my disappointment at the recent turn of events in Northern Ireland. It is a disheartening development. With the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998 and the overwhelming desire for peaceful resolution of the conflict—in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland—the prospects for peace in that troubled region had never seemed better.

The Good Friday Agreement, like all negotiated peace settlements, offers incentives to all parties but it also requires compromises—compromises that most people are willing to make, and have made, in order for peace. I do not pretend to speak for any side in Northern Ireland, but I can imagine that it was difficult for many in the Unionist community to see convicted IRA bombers walk free from prison.

And it was certainly difficult for many in the nationalist community to accept the principal of continued British sovereignty over Northern Ireland. But David Trimble, John Hume, and other honorable men and women have fulfilled their obligations under the Good Friday Agreement in order to give peace the opportunity to take root in Northern Ireland.

The current crisis stems from the refusal of one organization—the Irish Re-

publican Army—to begin the process of decommissioning of their weapons and explosives. The IRA claims it has done enough by keeping its guns silent, by not setting off bombs, by adhering to a cease-fire. But, Mr. President, what kind of democratic system exists when one organization maintains a massive arsenal for potential use in the event that it is dissatisfied with the political process? Is that considered a genuine peace? I maintain that it is not, and it should not be accepted by people in this country.

Let me clear, the IRA's political wing, Sinn Fein, signed onto decommissioning in the Good Friday Agreement. As the Agreement states: "all participants accordingly reaffirm their commitment to the total disarmament of all paramilitary organizations" and to "use any influence they may have, to achieve the decommissioning of all paramilitary arms within two years", which is May 22 of this year.

Now, Sinn Fein's leader Gerry Adams has said that his organization "has no further room to move", which I find quite interesting, considering that members of his party were allowed to participate in the local governing structures established by the Good Friday Agreement (but do not seem to be willing to convince the IRA it must fulfill its obligations as well).

I suggest that Mr. Adams be advised that he cannot have it both ways. And to those whose excuse is that the deadline for decommissioning is still three months off (May 22, 2000), I would remind them that there is an established body designed to manage this process and that the IRA refused to make any commitment or offer any timetable for decommissioning to this institution. It is difficult to believe that on May 21, 2000, the IRA would have, in any event, turned over its hundreds of guns, its tons of Semtex, which it maintains as a veto on peace.

We are at a critical point: due to lack of commitment by the IRA on decommissioning, the British government had no choice but to suspend the indigenous institutions of Northern Ireland. Why? Let me merely recite the obvious: Why should Sinn Fein be allowed to participate in legitimate, elected governing bodies when the IRA refuses to disarm? How can we expect the unionist community to deal with Sinn Fein officials in this capacity when the IRA has turned its back on this crucial part of the peace process?

Sinn Fein and the IRA continue to raise the bar; after demanding that the Northern Ireland Executive and Northern Ireland Assembly be established before beginning decommissioning, they now state that if the British withdraw their troops from bases in Northern Ireland, they might consider handing in their weapons. I would remind them that there is an agreement, there is a process that they have signed onto—from which they have benefitted. Their prisoners have been released. Plans for a drastic overhaul of the Royal Ulster

Constabulary have been put forth. Cross border institutions have been established and are functioning.

They must abide by their obligations as well. Mr. President, Sinn Fein and the IRA must understand that if they do not, they will not have the support of the United States.

Today I am offering a resolution stressing the importance of decommissioning to the success of the peace in Northern Ireland and calling on the IRA to commit to the process and to offer a timetable as to when they will turn in their arms and explosives. And although the loyalist paramilitary organizations have significantly fewer weapons in their possession, they must fulfill their promise to disarm as well. The two main loyalist paramilitaries have stated that they will disarm when the IRA begins to do so. If the IRA moves on decommissioning, these organizations should respond immediately.

This is an historic moment in Northern Ireland—the best chance for peace in a quarter of a century. Let us not waste it. We must encourage those who are working for peace. But more importantly, we must make clear to those who want to destroy this opportunity by clinging to old and violent means, they can not succeed.

SENATE RESOLUTION 260—TO EXPRESS THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO UNINSURED AND LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS IN MEDICALLY UNDER SERVED AREAS BE INCREASED IN ORDER TO DOUBLE ACCESS TO CARE OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS

Mr. BOND (for himself, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. HATCH, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. BREAUX, Mr. DEWINE, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. INOUE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

S. RES. 260

Whereas the uninsured population in the United States continues to grow at over 100,000 individuals per month, and is estimated to reach over 53,000,000 people by 2007;

Whereas the growth in the uninsured population continues despite public and private efforts to increase health insurance coverage;

Whereas nearly 80 percent of the uninsured population are members of working families who cannot afford health insurance or cannot access employer-provided health insurance plans;

Whereas minority populations, rural residents, and single-parent families represent a disproportionate number of the uninsured population;

Whereas the problem of health care access for the uninsured population is compounded in many urban and rural communities by a lack of providers who are available to serve both insured and uninsured populations;

Whereas community, migrant, homeless, and public housing health centers have proven uniquely qualified to address the lack of

adequate health care services for uninsured populations, serving over 4,500,000 uninsured patients in 1999, including over 1,000,000 new uninsured patients who have sought care from such centers in the last 3 years;

Whereas health centers care for nearly 7,000,000 minorities, nearly 600,000 farmworkers, and more than 500,000 homeless individuals each year;

Whereas health centers provide cost-effective comprehensive primary and preventive care to uninsured individuals for less than \$1.00 per day, or \$350 annually, and help to reduce the inappropriate use of costly emergency rooms and inpatient hospital care;

Whereas current resources only allow health centers to serve 10 percent of the Nation's 44,000,000 uninsured individuals;

Whereas past investments to increase health center access have resulted in better health, an improved quality of life for all Americans, and a reduction in national health care expenditures; and

Whereas Congress can act now to increase access to health care services for uninsured and low-income people together with or in advance of health care coverage proposals by expanding the availability of services at community, migrant, homeless, and public housing health centers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This resolution may be cited as the "Resolution to Expand Access to Community Health Centers (REACH Initiative)".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the sense of the Senate that appropriations for consolidated health centers under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b) should be increased by 100 percent over the next 5 fiscal years in order to double the number of individuals who receive health care services at community, migrant, homeless, and public housing health centers.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the hot topic in the world of health care—health care access. Many people see this as the biggest problem in health care today.

Part of the problem, and the part that has received the most attention, is that too many Americans lack health insurance—about 44 million Americans aren't covered by any type of health plan. But an equally serious part of the problem is many people's simple inability to get access to a health care provider. Even if they have insurance, a young couple with a sick child is out of luck if they can't get in to see a pediatrician or another health care provider. And in too many urban and rural communities across the country, there just aren't enough doctors to go around.

Several plans have been proposed recently on how to deal with the health care access problem. Senator Bradley has a plan. The Vice President has one. There's also a bipartisan proposal for tax credits to help people buy health insurance. All of these plans have at least 3 things in common.

First, they all address a worthwhile goal. I think we all want to see that people have access to good health care, even if we might disagree on how to get there.

Second, they're all very ambitious. Senator Bradley in fact is basically proposing to use close to the entire \$1

trillion surplus to provide people with health insurance.

The third thing these plans have in common—and perhaps the most important thing—is that they probably have little chance of becoming law this year. Whether because of policy differences or political differences, it's just not likely that they will pass.

So today, we're launching a bipartisan effort—called the REACH Initiative—that does have a chance this year. There's no need to wait for an election—we can do it now.

Our proposal builds on the crucial work that organizations known as community health centers have been doing to ensure better access to health care. Health centers are private nonprofit clinics that provide primary care and preventive health care services in medically underserved urban and rural communities across the country. Partially with the help of federal grants, health centers provide basic care for about 11 million people every year, 4 million of whom are uninsured.

The goal of the REACH Initiative is simple—to make sure more people have access to health care. We plan to achieve this by doubling federal funding for community health centers over a period of five years. We believe this will allow up to 10 million more women, children, and others in need to receive care at health centers. If we are successful with the REACH Initiative, we can practically double the number of uninsured and underinsured people that health centers care for.

The REACH Initiative basically recognizes the key contributions that community health centers have already made in addressing the health care access problems. But there is so much more that can still be done.

Now, out of all the ways we can address health care access problems, why are health centers a good solution and a worthwhile target for additional funding?

1. Health centers are an existing program that produces results. Too many health care proposals want to practically start from scratch, and make breathtakingly revolutionary changes. When I look at the health system and its admittedly huge problems, I sometimes think that might not be a bad idea. But it's also extremely risky. We need to remember that despite the many flaws in our health system, many people are pleased with it. We should be wary about making too radical changes that could interfere with what's right in our system. Instead, we can expand an existing part of the system that's been proven to provide cost-effective, high-quality care.

2. Health centers play a crucial role in health care, and are vastly underappreciated. It's amazing to me how few people are aware of the types of services community health centers provide, and just how prominent they are in health care. After all, health centers care for close to one out of every 20 Americans, one out of every 12 rural