

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?

No. 1, they are building on an existing program that produces results. Too many health care proposals want to start practically 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 is 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 is right in our system. Instead, we can expand an existing part of the system that has been proven to provide cost-effective, high-quality care.

No. 2, health centers play a crucial role in health care, and are vastly underappreciated. It is amazing to me how few people know what community health centers are. After all, health centers care for close to one out of every 20 Americans, one out of every 12 rural residents, one out of every 6 low-income children, and one of every 5 babies born to low-income families.

No. 3, health centers truly target the health care access problem. By definition, health centers must be located in "medically underserved" communities—which simply means places where people have serious problems getting access to health care. So health centers attack the problem right at its source. Unlike other health care proposals, the REACH Initiative does not create problems of "crowding out" private insurance by replacing private dollars spent on health insurance with Federal dollars. The health centers are partially funded by those patients who do have health insurance.

No. 4, they are relatively cheap. Health centers can provide primary and preventive care for one person for less than \$1 per day—about \$350 per year. That's just about the best value you will ever see in health care. Even better, health centers are able to leverage each grant dollar from the Federal Government into additional funding from other sources—meaning they can effectively turn one grant dollar into several dollars that can be used to address health care problems. With an extra billion dollars a year—the goal of the REACH Initiative in its fifth year—health centers could be caring for an additional 10 million people.

No. 5, this initiative is not a government takeover of health care. Admittedly, our plan calls for more government spending. This is of course true for most plans that try to deal with

health access problems. But this new funding would not go to create a huge new bureaucracy. Instead, the REACH Initiative would invest additional funds into private organizations that have consistently proven themselves to be efficient, high-quality, and cost-effective health care providers.

To me, all of these reasons point to one logical conclusion—a need for drastically increased funding for health centers. Health centers are already helping millions of Americans get health care. But they can still help millions more—pregnant women, children, and anyone else who desperately needs care.

Simply put, we must reach the goal of the REACH initiative—doubled funding for health care centers within 5 years—and we can and should make it happen.

Let me close with what this means in human terms.

The REACH initiative will help make sure that a young woman who has just found out she is pregnant but does not have health insurance has a place to get prenatal care so she does not risk her health and the baby's health by waiting until late in the pregnancy.

The REACH initiative will help make sure that a 6-year-old boy who is living in a deep rural Missouri community, a community that otherwise would not have any health care providers at all, has a place to get regular checkups so he can stay healthy at home and in school.

The REACH initiative will help make sure a young couple without any place to go will be able to get their infant daughter immunized to protect her from a variety of dreaded diseases.

The REACH initiative will make sure Americans like Denise Hall, a Washington, DC, resident, and her children have a place to get needed care. Denise joined us for our announcement last week and talked about her reliance on health care centers. The REACH initiative will make sure she and her children have a place to get needed care. Denise, at our press conference kicking off the REACH initiative, said she is an out-of-work mother of two who is working to improve her job skills so she can rejoin the workforce. But for the moment, she and her children simply have nowhere to go for health care needs other than a local community health center.

These Americans, and millions like them, are the reasons why we must make the REACH initiative—doubled funding for community health centers—become a reality. I invite my colleagues to join me and 12 others who cosponsored this resolution, and 29 distinguished health care organizations, in support of the REACH initiative. If we work together, we can make a difference and serve those who are in the greatest need of access to health care and who, without community health centers, will not have that access.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, what is the current status of business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming is notified that under the previous order, time until 2 p.m. is under the control of the Senator from Wyoming or his designee.

EXCESSIVE REGULATION BY THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, we have seen in the last several months, and I suspect we will continue to see from now until the end of this administration, a considerable effort to implement programs that bypass the Congress, programs that, indeed, bypass public input into those programs.

We have seen a great many Executive orders regarding regulations that have had limited, if any, public input. We have seen the use of the Antiquities Act and a number of other activities of this kind.

It is important that we remember the constitutional requirements of this Government, that there is a division within Government. That is what the legislative, executive, and judicial branches were designed to do, and they were purposely put in place to ensure that none of the three branches developed a domineering position and became a czar of the Government.

It is terribly important we take a look at this in Congress; that we ensure, to the extent we can, that this does not happen; that there is, indeed, as we move forward with various programs—whether they be regulatory, whether they be legislative—an opportunity for people to participate.

The current regulatory system encompasses more than 50 Federal agencies, more than 126,000 workers, and annual spending of more than \$14 billion in the area regulations.

From April 1, 1996, until March 31, 1999, Federal agencies issued nearly 13,000 final rules. Of these, 188 were major final rules that each carried an annual cost of more than \$100 million in our Nation's economy.

The paperwork burden of these Federal regulations is approaching \$190 billion annually. A recent study by the American Enterprise Institute concluded that all EPA rules promulgated between mid-1982 and mid-1996 under environmental statutes such as Superfund, the Clean Water Act, Toxic Substances Control Act, and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, have had negative net benefits; that is, they hurt more than they helped.

When these regulations come into place, we hear that there is going to be a partnership, a partnership between the communities, a partnership between the State, a partnership with the Federal Government. Unfortunately, it has been our experience, particularly in the area of public lands, the partnership is a little one sided, a one-horse, one-dog arrangement, not an equal partnership.

One example is the clean water action plan, an Executive order establishing 111 key actions designed to improve the Nation's remaining water impairment problems. Everyone wants to do that. Imagine putting into place in one move 111 different regulatory actions, done without the NEPA process, without the process of input, without the process of having public discussion.

The administration has requested roughly \$2 billion annually since 1998 for implementation. It has been an interesting process, particularly with EPA and the Committee on Environment and Public Works, which is taking a strong look at this and, in one instance, declared this agency had gone beyond its statutory authority.

One of the difficulties is, first of all, the nonpoint source idea which was never authorized in the Clean Water Act. It was only point sources which were authorized.

What is happening now is they have moved toward an implementation of the plan that is designed more to control the land use than, in fact, to control nonpoint source water.

The Environmental Protection Agency structured the plan around data that the GAO, the Government auditing organization, has criticized. In 1999, GAO cautioned the methodology used in determining both impairment levels and impacts from nonpoint source was underfunded and, consequently, results were very possibly inaccurate.

Specifically, GAO highlighted concerns relating to how the agency identified waters polluted by nonpoint sources, the need for more data to develop cost estimates, and the extent to which the Federal Government contributes to water pollution.

Instead of pulling back, having found out this information, EPA is moving forward with the implementation of the program. States and impacted industries have complained to EPA through the Congress, through the committees, that EPA's plan places a financial burden and amounts to an unfunded mandate.

This could be reasonable, if they went through the process of involving people before putting the regulations in place. But when the regulations are put there by fiat, certainly that is not something we expect to happen and should not allow to happen in our system of government.

Even USDA wrote a letter, saying when they were doing these activities in the old Soil Conservation Service, they were much more efficient. When we questioned EPA about that, they got the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture to change his mind and say: I really did not mean that at all.

Of course, 2 weeks ago I was in Wyoming for a week. Half of Wyoming belongs to the Federal Government. Much of our State is in public ownership. The use of those lands is vital to the economy. A multiple-use concept is what has made these lands useful, not only to preserve the environment,

which can be done, but as well to be able to use them for hunting, recreation, grazing, mineral production—all the things that go together to make up an economy in the West.

Now we are faced with some other propositions. In this case, the Forest Service has declared by regulatory fiat that there would be 40 million acres dedicated to roadless areas. Of course, we have roadless areas in the public lands. We have wilderness that has been set aside by congressional action. By the way, when it was set aside in Wyoming, the statute also said there would be no more wilderness set aside unless Congress made that proposal.

It has been very difficult. We have had several hearings with the Secretary of Agriculture and the Chief of the Forest Service to determine what "roadless" means, whether or not it is another way of having wilderness areas. The interesting part of it is, most of the lands that have been structured in this plan for roadless areas have roads on them; they are not roadless at all. But the Forest Service has done nothing to identify or solicit cooperating non-Federal agencies in the EIS.

Several of our States have asked to be cooperating agencies, which is what the Environmental Quality Group in the White House has said they are going to implement in all these kinds of programs, but the Forest Service has said: No, we are not going to have the States; we are not going to have the counties; we are not going to have these non-Federal agencies participate.

Hearings were held. Actually, they were not hearings; they were information systems. People were invited to come, but there was no information there. They were asked to respond to something without knowing what was being done. So there was really not public involvement of that kind.

The other thing is that we already have forest plans in place. Each forest is required to have a forest plan. I have no objection to the idea of limited roads, but it ought to be done in a way in which people can participate, and it ought to be done in a way in which Congress can participate. We are finding more and more of that happening in this so-called land legacy that is being put forth by the administration.

Last week, the Secretary of the Interior announced there would be literally millions of acres of Bureau of Land Management lands that would be set aside simply for their scenic value. That is very important to western public land States, where much of that land is part of our economy. It can be preserved for the environment. However, we also have to have multiple use. Those things will go together.

The Antiquities Act is another. In 1996, we put into law the Congressional Review Act which requires regulations be submitted to the Congress. They are interpreted by OMB. Those that have over \$100 million of value or cost are submitted to the Congress, with an op-

portunity to take a look—oversight—to see if those regulations are carrying out the spirit of the legislation which authorized them or, indeed, to see if in some cases they are being put into place without any statutory or regulatory authority.

Unfortunately, it has not worked well. The idea was to have it come to the Congress. It has to go through OMB first to decide whether it has the \$100 million impact. Then it comes to the Congress, but the Congress has not had an opportunity to deal with it.

Unfortunately, from April 1 of 1996 until March 1 of 1999, Federal agencies issued, as I said before, 13,000 final rules. And 188 fell within this category of \$100 million. Unfortunately, not one has been changed by the Congress because this bill is not workable.

We have to make it work. We need to create a congressional regulatory analysis group that has the opportunity to look into these bills. Much like CBO, Congress needs an entity to take a look at them. Right now, unfortunately, it does not work. I think certainly we have to do something to keep this administration from running roughshod over my constituents' interests, the Presiding Officer's constituents' interests, and others. There needs to be this balance. I think the Congressional Review Act could be that balance, if it has some changes.

Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from Utah for 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I rise to note two events, one historic today and one somewhat historic tomorrow—one looking a little bit back with some nostalgia and the other looking back with some degree of finality.

THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, today, the 28th of February, is the 150th anniversary of the founding of the University of Utah. We look back with nostalgia but also look forward with great excitement at the future of that particular university.

It is a university to which I am attached both in personal life and by legacy. Both of my parents graduated from the University of Utah. My two brothers and two sisters attended the University of Utah. I graduated from the University of Utah. My wife attended the University of Utah. We are a Utah family.

The university started on the 28th of February, 1850. For those who understand Utah history, they will realize that the State, at least to the degree it is now, began on the 24th of July, 1847. So for those who founded the State, to focus on the creation of the University of Deseret, as they then called it, so quickly after they arrived in Salt Lake Valley is a testimony to their vision and their determination to make higher education a very key part of their lives.