

According to information from Common Cause and Citizens for Tax Justice, just 14 corporations alone would reap a \$6.3 billion windfall from the retroactive repeal of the alternative minimum tax in the House-passed package. Enron, which has given more than \$3.7 billion in soft money from 1991 through 2000, will get an estimated \$254 million refund under this bill. Chevron Texaco, which gave more than \$3.6 billion in soft money over the last 10 years, will get an estimated refund of \$572 million. General Electric gave \$1.3 billion, and they'll get \$671 million. And this list goes on. Billions upon billions of dollars being funneled back to big donors at a time when more and more Americans are out of work, lacking health care coverage and struggling to pay their bills.

The House package also gave a temporary tax break to multinational corporations on some profits from their foreign operations. As the Washington Post pointed out, "it's hard to see how this measure, which would encourage firms to keep money outside the country, would do anything to stimulate the American economy." This measure rewards some of the biggest donors in the banking, investment and life insurance industries. Some of the biggest donors in these industries include Merrill Lynch, which has given more than \$2.2 billion in soft money over the last 10 years, and Citigroup, which has given more than \$2.1 billion during the last 10 years, according to Common Cause.

The House-passed package even included Medical Savings Accounts, which soft money donor Golden Rule Financial Corporation and other insurance interests have lobbied for for many years. Golden Rule gave just shy of \$1.3 billion in soft money in the last ten years.

The stimulus bill should have been an opportunity to stimulate the economy; instead it turned out to be a chance for special interests to add the provisions they've been pushing for all these years. Wealthy interests haven't hesitated to take this difficult period for the country and exploit it for their own gain. And if this version of the bill ever passes, they will reap an enormous financial windfall.

In the last few months, the Nation has endured a great deal, and we will continue to face enormous challenges. As a Congress, we must address the issues before us with the kind of integrity that these challenges will demand. But we can't meet those challenges when the legislative process is hobbled by the clout of special interests. The stimulus bill was a sobering example of a bill that went through that process, and fell far short of its goal.

The stimulus bill was a missed opportunity that the Nation may pay dearly for down the road. We've missed an opportunity, but we don't have to miss another one. I hope when Congress returns next year, we will rise to meet the next challenge before us: getting

campaign finance reform to the President's desk. The Nation is closely watching our work here, more now than ever in the wake of September 11. And bills like the stimulus package would make any American wonder whether we are truly conducting the people's business on this floor. We must restore integrity to legislative process, and restore the people's faith in us and what we do.

I think we can start by voting against this bill, if it comes to us in a form like the House-passed bill. But we must do much more, we must abolish soft money and shut down the issue ad loophole, and it can't wait another year. Campaign finance reform should be one of the first orders of business when we return next year. The American people are looking to us for leadership, and I believe that this Senate can provide that leadership. We can show the American people that we have the courage and leadership they seek, and we can start by making campaign finance reform the law of the land.

TRIBUTE TO KEVIN P. POWER, NASA FELLOW

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to recognize and say farewell to an outstanding NASA Manager, Kevin P. Power, upon his departure from my staff. Mr. Power was selected as a Congressional Fellow to work in my office because of his knowledge of the aerospace industry, NASA programs, and the John C. Stennis Space Center in my home State of Mississippi. It is a privilege for me to recognize the many outstanding achievements he has provided for the U.S. Senate, NASA, and our great Nation.

During his NASA fellowship, Mr. Power worked on legislation affecting NASA and the aerospace industry. He worked hard to ensure that the NASA appropriations bill for fiscal year 2002 included legislative provisions that will support specific programs aimed at fostering the development of a robust U.S. space propulsion industry, which includes rocket engine testing at Stennis Space Center. Specifically, he helped ensure that NASA's rocket engine test facilities are ready to provide continued support for testing under NASA's Space Launch Initiative.

Mr. Power also worked to ensure that adherence to past legislative provisions affecting land remote sensing data buys are being met to continue the stimulation of a private sector remote sensing industry without competition from the U.S. Government.

Mr. Power graduated from the University of New Orleans, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering, prior to beginning his engineering career with the U.S. Navy in Annapolis, MD, as a civilian engineer working on submarine acoustics. He transitioned to an aerospace career as a contract engineer supporting Space Shuttle launches at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Flor-

ida and then joined NASA shortly after the Shuttle's return to flight following the Challenger disaster.

As a project engineer with NASA, he supported various propulsion development programs at Stennis Space Center, including the Air Force's New Launch System, NASA's Advanced Solid Rocket Motor, the NASA/Air Force National Aerospace Plane, and the NASA X-33 Aerospike Engine. During this time he attended Florida Tech, where he received a Master of Science in Management degree and eventually transitioned to a job with more responsibilities as a NASA project manager for Boeing's Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle and NASA's Rocket Based Combined Cycle test facility.

Mr. President, Mr. Power is married to the former Susan Foreman of Crowley, LA. They have two children, a 7-year-old-son Brandon and a 5-year-old daughter Madison, and are expecting their third child next year in March. Mr. Power will return to NASA Stennis Space Center to continue his endeavors in the area of rocket propulsion testing. I will truly miss his experience and assistance he has provided to me, and I wish him all the very best as he helps NASA advance its efforts in the areas of space propulsion and remote sensing in the 21st century.

RECLASSIFICATION OF SCRANTON- WILKES BARRE-HAZLETON, WIL- LIAMSPORT, AND SHARON MET- ROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I wish to thank the senior Senator from Pennsylvania for working with me on this very important issue of Medicare provider payment policy, particularly in light of the unique financial pressures being faced by the hospitals in Scranton-Wilkes Barre, Williamsport, and Sharon metropolitan statistical areas, MSAs, which emanate in part from some glaring disparities in Medicare's payment formulas.

As I travel around the Commonwealth, many health care leaders have conveyed to me their continued concerns about the impact of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, BBA, on their health care delivery operations. Our Pennsylvania constituents, who represent rural, urban and community hospitals and systems, have shared with us detailed information about the financially strained health care delivery environment under the BBA.

We are all aware of the administrative and financial challenges that health care providers all across the country face, particularly in their service to our Nation's elderly population. But the environment in which the hospitals in these three areas of Pennsylvania are seeking to deliver quality health care to their respective communities is even more challenging given that their MSAs contain areas or border on areas from which higher compensated providers, with similar health care delivery costs, draw their patients, and more importantly, their

workforce. Facilities located in these areas must compete for workers and patients against hospitals in neighboring MSAs with drastically higher wage indices, even when labor and health care delivery costs are virtually identical. This situation is simply not sustainable.

And these problems are only exacerbated by our Nation's ongoing nursing shortage, and the scarcity of other skilled care givers. Health care workforce shortages are particularly acute in these areas of the Commonwealth, and they have the effect of driving up the cost of health care and precipitating the need to increase wages. And although these hospitals have taken the step of increasing wages, further reductions in the wage index will make it impossible for the hospitals to retain or recruit all the caregivers that the communities require.

Other regions near the Scranton-Wilkes Barre-Hazleton MSA, including Newburgh, Allentown and Harrisburg, continue to recruit workers from its skilled workforce.

Likewise in the Sharon MSA: All of the hospitals in the Sharon MSA compete with the Youngstown, OH, MSA for nurses, pharmacists, radiology technicians, and other allied health professionals. As Senator SPECTER had mentioned, Youngstown pays nurses \$2 to \$3 more per hour than hospitals in Sharon, yet those hospitals receive the lowest area wage index in Pennsylvania.

I have been working on this unique Medicare payment problem for more than 2 years now, seeking to enact at least a temporary reclassification of several Northeastern Pennsylvania counties into the Newburgh, NY—Pennsylvania MSA; Northumberland County into the Harrisburg-Lebanon-Carlisle MSA; and Mercer County into the Youngstown-Warren, OH, MSA. As Senator SPECTER had mentioned, there are other areas around the country where glitches such as these can be found. And what we seek to do with the submission of this legislative language is to put our colleagues on notice that we are determined to work on a bipartisan basis to bring much needed relief to our negatively affected hospitals, and to do the same for other areas around the country where these circumstances have caused similar problems and merit similar response.

I have recently spoken directly with Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member GRASSLEY about this very issue, and my strong desire to achieve a legislative fix as soon as possible. I am also a strong supporter of legislation to set the rural wage index nationally at a uniform and higher rate. However, whether or not Congress considers a national solution to this area of Medicare law is unclear, and our hospitals cannot afford to wait for a national solution that may be a year or two away.

In closing, I wish to relay to our colleagues that achieving this financial

relief for these hospitals in Pennsylvania is of utmost importance to myself and Senator SPECTER. We are willing to work with our colleagues in any way in order to bring about stability in the funding of these community health care providers and to ensure that the many Medicare beneficiaries living in the Commonwealth have access to needed care.

HONORING MONTANANS FACING THE SEPTEMBER 11TH TRAGEDY

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, some time has passed since the tragic events that took place in New York, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania. Nevertheless, I want to reflect upon the events of that day and draw attention to the tremendous good that has evolved in the face of evil. Since that time, it has become evident that the American public is the most patriotic and resilient group the world will ever see. Those who may have been strangers are now confidants, those who were acquaintances are now considered family.

During this trying time, I want both to express my heartfelt condolences to all those directly involved in this tragedy, and to commend and honor those who have devoted their soul to working to restore tranquility and normalcy to the Nation. From firehouses to schoolhouses, from New York City to San Francisco and everywhere in between, Americans have repeatedly demonstrated their capacity for compassion.

I want to begin by addressing the families of those who lost their lives on United flight 93. I cannot begin to comfort them in their grief, but I must say that they have every reason to be extremely proud of the bravery shown by those on Flight 93. Their efforts are commended by all who stand here in Congress. As Americans, we all recognize, that we owe your family a debt that cannot be repaid.

Montanans have been deeply affected by this tragedy; they have contacted me with their grief, their hope for victory, and their desire to aid in the relief effort. Tragically, Adam Larson of Choteau, MT, was an employee of Aon Corp., located on what was the 103rd floor of the World Trade Center. In the midst of the attacks, he phoned his wife Patti and told her the building was being evacuated and he was on his way to safety. He was last seen by his co-workers following them down the stairs to exit the building, a building he never escaped. Adam Larson was 37 years old, and senior vice president for Aon. Many think that because of his outwardly giving personality, he may have stopped to help someone in need. I, along with Montanans everywhere grieve with the Larson family, pray for hope, and express our sincere support in enduring a set of circumstances that is difficult to comprehend.

In addition to grief, Montanans have also displayed the characteristic re-

solve that has defined us since our statehood. From Libby to Great Falls to Alzada, Montana has joined together to show patriotism and support for the American effort. Blood drives are going on at Malmstrom Air Force base in Great Falls, MT, as I speak today. Percentages of all sales in the town of Conrad, MT, are being designated for the relief effort.

I also want to point out the efforts of Burlington Elementary School in Billings. The motivation of one 3rd grade cub scout named Jim Rubich to raise pennies for the recovery of the WTC and the Pentagon has spun into a full scale effort on the part of many Montana elementary schools. Jim, in true Montana spirit, marched up to his teacher's desk with a bag full of pennies and demanded that an effort be enacted to raise pennies for the victims of this terrible attack. His message was heard loud and clear, and now what began as a penny drive, started by the innocent and unwavering patriotism of one little boy, is on pace to raise \$18,000. This is the next generation of American workers, soldiers, carriers of freedom, and already in their young life they are strong contributors. I think the promise that is displayed here speaks for itself. We must protect these young people so that they may pick up the torch when it is their time. We cannot and will not fail them. I pledge to Jimmy Rubich that 20 years from now, his great Nation, the United States of America, will still be the beacon of freedom that it is today.

THE WTO MEETING IN QATAR, TAIWAN'S ACCESSION TO THE WTO, AND TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise to note that yesterday the WTO concluded its fourth ministerial meeting in Doha, Qatar.

Circumstances leading to this meeting were not auspicious. There is a war on, after all, and the Middle East is not the most comfortable place for the champions of globalization and progress.

With the global economic slowdown, protectionism is on the rise. Not exactly the best time to undertake talks to expand global trade.

Many of us remember that in 1999, the WTO met in Seattle in very difficult circumstances. The city was rocked by rioting, the participants failed to reach consensus, and the basic assumptions underlying international trade were left in tatters. In sharp contrast and against some tough odds, the WTO ministerial meeting was a great success.

The WTO initiated a new Round of international trade negotiations, setting forth an ambitious agenda by overcoming difficult objections from the EU, the developing world, and even those in this country who are less-than-appreciative of the importance of international trade.