

reform, and I will therefore support it. I have one serious reservation about the bill, however, and that is its increase in the hard money limits. Although I fully understand the argument that the limits have not kept up with inflation, I am concerned that the increases in individual limits and, most especially, aggregate limits, do not take us in the right direction of decreasing the amount of money in elections. Moreover, this increase simply enables the tiniest percentage of the population that currently contributes large contributions to contribute even more. This increase does nothing at all to increase the role the average voter plays in our election process.

Nevertheless, the vote yesterday is a victory for reform—but it needs to be the first vote, not the last. I want to offer my congratulations to my friends RUSSELL FEINGOLD and JOHN McCAIN on this victory for reform, passage of a bill that breaks free from the status quo and will help us restore the dwindling faith the average American has in our political system. For too long we've known that we can't go on leaving our citizens with the impression that the only kind of influence left in American politics is the kind you wield with a checkbook. This bill reduces the power of the checkbook and I am proud to support it.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I concur with the statement of supporters of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2001, with respect to the discussion of the intent of the Specter amendment.

VIOLENCE AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the Josephson Institute of Ethics, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, recently released its survey on violence and substance abuse in the United States. The survey finds that a disturbing number of young people have easy access to guns and have brought those guns and other weapons to school in the past year.

According to those surveyed, 47 percent of all high school students and 22 percent of all middle school students reported having easy access to guns. Of those students who reported drinking at school in the past 12 months, those with easy access to guns jumped to an astonishing 71 percent for high school students and 59 percent for middle school students.

Furthermore, 14 percent of high school students and 11 percent of middle school students admitted that they brought weapons to school in the past 12 months. Again, those numbers increased dramatically among students who also reported drinking at school at some point in the last year to 48 percent for high school students and 57 percent for middle school students.

Easy access to guns among our young people is dangerous, but access to guns

paired with access to alcohol or drugs is recipe for disaster. And while the vast majority of students will be safe in their classrooms, our youth's easy access to firearms makes 36 percent of high school students and 39 percent of middle school students feel unsafe at school. Unfortunately, unless Congress and acts to curb youth access to guns, in some cases, that fear may become a reality for more and more students.

CONGRESSMAN NORMAN SISISKY

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay my respects to the memory of my dear friend, Congressman Norman Sisisky. Like many of my colleagues, I was shocked and saddened at hearing the news of his sudden passing last Friday. We have lost a respected and treasured colleague; the people of Virginia have lost one of the most committed and effective men ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives; and America has lost a distinguished member of what Tom Brokaw has called "the greatest generation."

Norm Sisisky was a classic example of the devoted public official our founders envisioned serving in "the people's house." For Norm was a man of the people, someone who worked hard, played by the rules and maintained a steadfast commitment to his family and community.

That he excelled in politics is no surprise to those of us who knew him. He genuinely liked and respected people and they returned that with the trust and affection. His trademark grin and infectious laugh drew people to him. Norm never took himself too seriously, and always took great delight in good-natured banter.

But he did take his job seriously. He was an aggressive advocate for his constituents in Virginia's 4th Congressional district for the past 18 years. He never forgot his roots, and never wavered in his commitment to fighting for the little guy, and he never lost sight of his role as their voice in our great system.

But of all his many and important public accomplishments, Norm Sisisky was probably proudest of his service in the U.S. Navy, and of his advocacy in Congress for our servicemen and women. Those of us who have had the privilege of watching Norm battle on behalf of our armed services from his position on the House Armed Services Committee were always impressed by his extensive knowledge and his keen insight. And we were inspired by his determination to keep our defenses strong, even if we in the Senate occasionally had to face his formidable presence in disagreement in conference.

I will forever remember Norm Sisisky as a man of considerable skill, devotion, humor, and honor. He leaves behind a loving family, devoted friends, and a strong nation. That is his proud legacy.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr President, as we welcome the blooms of spring this April, we should also take a moment to focus on the well-being of our most precious resource, our children. Since 1983, April has been nationally recognized as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Since then, organizations like Prevent Child Abuse America have been passionate advocates for our children and have raised awareness of this egregious problem. In my own state of Wisconsin, the local chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America in Madison has been an effective leader in the fight against child abuse.

Child abuse is an urgent national problem. According to Prevent Child Abuse America, more than three million children were reported to child protective service agencies as alleged victims of child abuse or neglect in 1998, and about one million of these reports were confirmed. And these numbers just reflect those cases that were reported. Undoubtedly, many more cases go unreported.

Child abuse is not only physical harm, but it can also include emotional abuse and mental damage resulting from physical abuse. The documented physical and emotional harm to children includes chronic health problems, low self-esteem, physical disabilities, and the inability to form healthy relationships with others.

Protecting our children should be a national priority. I urge my colleagues and others to support child abuse prevention efforts to protect our nation's greatest resource, our children. Working together, we can help end child abuse.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, April 2, 2001, the Federal debt stood at \$5,745,399,258,826.83, Five trillion, seven hundred forty-five billion, three hundred ninety-nine million, two hundred fifty-eight thousand, eight hundred twenty-six dollars and eighty-three cents.

Five years ago, April 2, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,120,563,000,000, Five trillion, one hundred twenty billion, five hundred sixty-three million.

Ten years ago, April 2, 1991, the Federal debt stood at \$3,464,021,000,000, Three trillion, four hundred sixty-four billion, twenty-one million.

Fifteen years ago, April 2, 1986, the Federal debt stood at \$2,005,753,000,000, Two trillion, five billion, seven hundred fifty-three million.

Twenty-five years ago, April 2, 1976, the Federal debt stood at \$599,291,000,000, Five hundred ninety-nine billion, two hundred ninety-one million, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion, \$5,146,108,258,826.83, Five trillion, one hundred forty-six billion, one hundred eight million, two hundred fifty-eight

thousand, eight hundred twenty-six dollars and eighty-three cents during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

THE GRAND OPENING OF THE ABERDEEN COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate the veterans community of Aberdeen on the opening, on April 11, 2001, of their new Aberdeen Community Based Outpatient Clinic. This important event brings the health benefits that our veterans so richly deserve closer to home.

I would like to commend Ron Porzio, the chief operating officer of the Veterans Administration Medical and Regional Office Center in Sioux Falls, the area veterans service officers, Brown County Veterans Service Officer Tom Gohn, veterans service organizations and the Aberdeen area veterans who have done such an outstanding job of making this project a reality.

I was pleased to hear that Avera United Clinic was named the provider for the new VA outpatient clinic in Aberdeen. Avera has made a solid investment in the community and the state, and it was only logical that the clinic should provide quality health care services to our veterans in the Aberdeen area. This is good news for veterans in northeastern South Dakota because they will be able to receive many medical services at the clinic without having to drive several hours to the Sioux Falls veterans hospital.

Congratulations also need to go to Avera St. Luke's Hospital, Dr. Steve Redmond, Physician's Assistant Kevin Vaughan, Clinic Administrator Leonard Severson, the clinic's support staff, and CR Associates on their new partnership with the VA.

Veterans are our country's heroes, and their selfless actions will inspire generations of Americans yet to come. Our country must honor its commitments to veterans, not only because it is the right thing to do, but also because it is the smart thing to do.

I will continue to lead efforts to ensure that our nation's military retirees and veterans receive the benefits they were promised years ago. While I am pleased with some improvements in military health care funding passed into law last year, I am concerned that more needs to be done. Assuredly, I will continue to fight for military retirees and veterans programs throughout this session of Congress.●

HONORING THE CENTRAL BUCKS EAST CHOIR OF BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

• Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to recognize an outstanding group of young people from Bucks County, PA. The Central Bucks East High School Choirs, under the direction of E. Scott Teschner and the String Orchestra, under the direction of Eileen Telly,

traveled to Washington, DC and Virginia to be adjudicated in Music Festivals throughout the weekend of March 30, 2001.

The 25-member String Orchestra performed at Lanier Middle School in Fairfax, VA on Saturday, March 31, and the choirs sang at W.T. Woodson High School, also in Fairfax. These choirs include a 165-voice Concert Choir, 16-voice Varsity Singers, 16-voice Men's Ensemble and 27-voice Women's Ensemble. Later that evening, these talented students celebrated at an awards banquet and dance, and on Sunday, April 1, 2001, they traveled to the West Terrace of the United States Capitol for a public performance.

This group of students has been recognized for their outstanding choral abilities in Washington, Williamsburg, Orlando, Boston, and Montreal. In addition, they have been recognized since 1991 as the "Outstanding Choral Program" in every festival in which they have participated. Performances are judged according to National Standards of Excellence by college choral professors, and the Central Bucks East Choirs consistently earn "Superior" ratings. In addition, they are frequently honored with the "Special Adjudicators Award for Distinguished Performance," presented only to the elite choirs in the nation. These singers have also received the "Spirit of the Festival Award" for the last 2 years, which is awarded to the organization that best represents their community and school, and that is the most cooperative and enthusiastic during the festival.

It is without a doubt that this group is an outstanding representation of young people in Pennsylvania and across the country. They have demonstrated tremendous talent both musically and through their leadership and maturity. I enthusiastically congratulate the Choirs and String Orchestra from Central Bucks High School-East, and I extend my best wishes for their future success.●

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. ARBELIA GREER PENNINGTON WOOD

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am delighted to rise today to acknowledge and congratulate Mrs. Arbelia Greer Pennington Wood, a resident from my home State of Michigan, who will be celebrating her 116th birthday on Friday, April 6, 2001.

The child of a sharecropper, Mrs. Wood, who is affectionately called "Ma" by her nephews and nieces, was born in Caledonia, MS in 1885. Raised in Alabama, she moved to Detroit in 1934. Throughout her life, she has been guided by devotion to her family and a deep and abiding faith. Though widowed twice, Mrs. Wood has never been alone. She has been actively involved in the lives of her extended family, which includes not only her nieces and nephews, but also children in her neighborhood. Family members and friends have all commented on her

cooking abilities and her ability to teach families about cooking, grammar and even carpentry.

In addition to a multitude of nephews and nieces, Mrs. Wood has been blessed to be part of a family noted for its longevity. Her mother lived to be ninety-three years old. A brother of hers lived to be eighty-nine, and many of her younger siblings are currently in their eighties and nineties. One of her nieces has designed a website dedicated to her beloved "Ma." On that website is posted a verse from the Book of Genesis: "Sarah lived to be 127 years old." I cannot help but think that this verse has not only been an inspiration but also a challenge to Ardelia's family.

Mrs. Wood has seen the turn of two centuries. She has also displayed immense courage throughout her life. Twice she has successfully battled breast cancer. In addition, she has participated as a civil rights activist. As a child, Mrs. Woods refused to take the advice of her white doctors to identify herself as being Caucasian. Later in life, she demanded that a Mt. Clemens, MI restaurant serve herself and her darker skinned husband whom they were denying service. The restaurant eventually relented. Arbelia has witnessed the many changes that have affected our society. By caring for her family, actively participating in her church and serving as a midwife, Arbelia Greer Pennington Wood has quietly worked to make this country a better place. Such daily acts of commitment and civic duty are the foundation upon which this nation is built.

Mrs. Arbelia Greer Pennington Wood can take pride on the occasion of her 116th birthday. I am honored to join her family in wishing her a blessed and happy birthday. I hope my Senate colleagues will join me in congratulating Mrs. Arbelia Greer Pennington Wood.●

TRIBUTE TO AMERICAN RED CROSS, MID-RIO GRANDE CHAPTER

• Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to an organization that celebrates a special anniversary in New Mexico this month. The Red Cross, Mid-Rio Grande Chapter this April celebrates its 85th anniversary of being a humanitarian presence in my home state.

Last May, the devastating Cerro Grande wildfire destroyed hundreds of homes in Los Alamos and caused the evacuation of more than 25,000 people in the region. New Mexico residents, business leaders and numerous agencies generously responded to support a relief effort. But one agency stood out as a leader in the swift response to meet emergency needs of the thousands of families affected: the American Red Cross.

The Albuquerque-based Mid-Rio Grande Chapter serves as the Red Cross' lead unit for disaster services in New Mexico. As such, the Mid-Rio