

had served as both the first head of the Tennessee Valley Authority and the first chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. His Congressional testimony in 1976 in opposition to U.S. nuclear exports and in support of non-proliferation legislation caused a furor among his former colleagues. He once said to me, "If we assume nuclear proliferation to be inevitable, of course it will be." That made a lot of sense to me then, and still does today.

Ted Taylor, America's most creative fission bomb designer and a member of NCI's Board, also made a concise and compelling point: "Nuclear is different," he said. And to illustrate the point, he noted that the bomb that destroyed Nagasaki set off an instant of explosive energy equivalent to a pile of dynamite as big as the White House that was contained in a sphere of plutonium no bigger than a baseball. That was a first-generation bomb, a technological feat now within the grasp of terrorists or radical states if they manage to get their hands on the material.

Ultimately it comes down to a test of reasonableness. Is it reasonable to assume, over time, that millions of kilograms of plutonium can be sequestered down to the less than 8 kilograms needed for such a bomb? This question, in my view, must be answered before giving any further comfort to and support of an industry that remains officially committed to utilizing plutonium as a fuel—and surely before supporting an extension and expansion of that industry in response to electricity-supply shortages and global warming.

I close with a reminder from one of NCI's original Board members, the historian Barbara Tuchman, who in her book of the same title gave a sobering description of the "march of folly" that drives nations to destruction. She identified this phenomenon, one repeated throughout recorded history, as "pervasive persistence in a policy demonstrably unworkable or counterproductive." To qualify as folly, she said, it "must have been perceived as counter-productive in its own time, not merely by hindsight, . . . (and) a feasible alternative course of action must have been available."

MOTHER'S DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to honor America's mothers. On Sunday, May 13th, families across America will celebrate Mother's Day. This is a special time of year, when we pay tribute to our mothers for playing an important role in our lives.

Mother's Day is a time to thank mothers for their patience, compassion, and devotion. Mothers have taught us to be who we are today and who we will be in the future. They instill values of respect and honor in our lives. On this day, we acknowledge the role mothers play in shaping our nation's future, one child at a time.

Our mothers were first honored in this way in 1907, when Anna Jarvis petitioned influential political and religious leaders to adopt a formal holiday honoring mothers. She hoped that such an observance would increase respect for parents and strengthen family bonds. Thanks to her efforts, in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. He declared that on this day, the U.S. flag is to be displayed in government buildings and at people's homes

"as a public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country."

This year, as we celebrate Mother's Day, we are reminded of the changing role of mothers in our society. Today, mothers are not only homemakers and volunteers. They are lawyers and doctors, teachers and nurses, Senators and CEOs. In fact, half of American women with children under the age of eighteen now work full time, outside the home. Whether our mothers work inside or outside the home, they are our caretakers and nurturers. They are the cornerstone of our country. Their role in our society is priceless.

With all of our mothers' hard-work and devotion, it is no wonder that each year families search for the perfect gift to give for Mothers' Day. We purchase flowers, candy, and cards. Yet, America's mothers deserve more. Mothers want to know that their children are safe in school, receiving the best possible education, and protected from dangers in the community. This is where we, as lawmakers, have a role to play. We can do more to help mothers. We can help give them something they want and deserve for Mother's Day by passing legislation that reduces the number of guns on our streets, improves our schools, and protect our neighborhoods.

One year ago I joined over 900,000 mothers, fathers and children across the country in the Million Mom March. We came out on Mother's Day to renew our commitment to our children—we will continue to work tirelessly to prevent the senseless gun related deaths of our children. We want to raise our children, not bury them.

We joined together to talk about the need for gun safety and sensible gun control. Yet this body has turned a deaf ear to the calls.

While some downplay the fact that guns are more rampant in America than in any other country, more and more children are killed by guns. Every day, 10 mothers are told that their child has been killed by gunfire. That is 10 too many. Last Congress, I introduced bipartisan legislation with eight other Senators, known as the Child Access Prevention, CAP, bill, in an effort to hold gun owners accountable when they fail to safely store their firearms. Gun owners need to assume responsibility for safely storing their firearms in a way that is not accessible to children. Unfortunately, the Congress did not pass my bill. I plan to reintroduce this legislation during this Congress and I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort.

Here we are, two years after Columbine, one year after the Million Mom March, and two months after Santana High, and this Senate still has not acted on any gun legislation. How many more mothers will have to celebrate Mother's Day without their children at their side before we begin helping law enforcement and school officials end the violence in our schools?

Our mothers should not have to fear sending their children to school. We must pass sensible gun laws—for our nation, for our children, for our mothers.

This year, for Mother's Day, let us also assure mothers that their children are receiving a quality education. Too many school children face challenges that inhibit their ability to learn. Student-to-teacher ratios are too large, teachers are not properly trained, and the best technology is not made available. Mothers count on our schools to provide their children with the best possible education. Yet, our schools are not meeting the standards. While Congress debates funding priorities, our children are leaving school unprepared for their futures.

We must increase Federal support for education to ensure that all our children have the skills and knowledge they will need in the future. Our goal must be to make every child a success story. Allocated funding will allow schools to reduce class sizes and increase professional development programs for teachers. It will help local schools invest in and integrate new technology in classrooms and help expand school counseling, school safety, and substance abuse programs. By helping our schools, we will assure mothers that their children are ready for the future.

As a gift for Mother's Day, we can also give children a place to go after school hours. With one half of American mothers working full time outside the home, many children come home from school to an empty house. It is during this time when many unsupervised children find trouble. A study released by the YMCA of the USA designated the hours between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. as the "danger zone." Teenagers are more likely to drink, smoke, or engage in sexual activity because they are unsupervised. But this time could and should be used for productive activities.

The hours after school should be a time to learn and grow, not invite trouble. We need to expand funding for programs like Chicago's Lighthouse after school program, so that children have access to tutoring and mentoring programs, recreational activities, and literacy education after the school day ends. When children participate in these programs, working mothers can be reassured that their children are not only safe, but thriving, while they are at work.

In conclusion, Sunday is our special opportunity to recognize the role of mothers and to thank them for their nurture, care, and love. On Sunday, when we salute our mothers for the role they have played in our lives, let's recommit ourselves to give them a gift in return, a gift they will treasure. Let's pass sensible gun laws, increase funding to our schools, and protect our communities. That is what our mothers want, on Mother's Day and every day. And that is what we should give them.

MEDICARE INPATIENT HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, today, I am so pleased to join my good friends, Senator HUTCHISON from Texas and Senator BAYH from Indiana, in supporting this legislation to help Medicare payments keep pace with the rising costs of hospital care, and to halt further Medicare reductions to teaching hospitals.

Our hospitals are under tremendous strain. They face soaring costs from nearly every direction: The growing number of uninsured individuals coupled with the devastating shortages of skilled health care workers. The struggle to afford skyrocketing pharmaceuticals prices, while simultaneously investing in emerging needs, such as information technology. At the same time, reductions in Medicare payments have hindered hospitals' ability to respond to these increased demands. How can we expect patients to receive quality health care when we're asking our hospitals to do more with so much less?

As you know, this week we are focusing on the crisis around the shortage of nurses. Ninety-one percent of hospitals in New York State report shortages of registered nurses, RNs. But this is really just the tip of the iceberg. The shortages in the health care workforce permeate the entire health care system, especially our hospitals. There are shortages in pharmacists, technicians, nurse aides, billing staff, and housekeepers that have all negatively impacted the quality of care New Yorkers are able to receive.

As a representative of the State of New York, I am especially troubled by the growing strains that our hospitals have been forced to contend with on top of the devastating cuts that have resulted from the balanced budget agreement of 1997, BBA. I have heard numerous firsthand accounts of the adverse impact on New York hospitals and the facts speak for themselves: In the 2 years following the BBA, New York hospitals' financial health ranked worst in the Nation. In fact, almost two-thirds of New York hospitals had negative operating margins last year. And in addition to the workforce shortage affecting health providers nationwide, New York providers are also confronting labor costs increases of 5-7 percent a year, while the Medicare rates for inpatient hospital rates, even with the full market basket update we are seeking in today's legislation, expected to rise only around 3.1 percent.

In recent years, Congress has successfully provided some short-term relief to address areas where the cuts enacted in the BBA of 1997 went much further than intended. However, much of the relief merely postponed scheduled cuts in Medicare payments and that is why the legislation that we are introducing today is so important.

This legislation today would eliminate some of those previously delayed cuts. First, it would restore the market

basket update for inpatient hospital rates to the full level, rather than market-basket minus 0.55 percent, as scheduled for fiscal year 2002 and 2003. This important step will help hospitals nationwide keep up with the rising costs of inpatient care for Medicare beneficiaries. This provision helps all hospitals in New York State by increasing inpatient hospital payments across the board.

I am especially pleased that this legislation would also address the cuts faced by teaching hospitals to their Medicare indirect medical education payments. Teaching hospitals are the crown jewels of our Nation's health care system and play a vital role in making our system one of the finest in the world.

We rely on them to train physicians and nurses, care for the sickest of the sick and the poorest of the poor, and engage in research and clinical trials. Thanks to the research, for example, at Memorial Sloan-Kettering, cancer patients will suffer less while receiving chemotherapy because of a drug that was developed there.

As my predecessor and friend, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, in whose footsteps I am so honored to be following, put it so well a few years ago, "We are in the midst of a great era of discovery in the medical science. It is certainly not a time to close medical schools. This great era of medical discovery is occurring right here in the United States . . . And it is centered in New York City."

This legislation that we are introducing today would address the cuts faced by teaching hospitals to their Medicare indirect medical education payments. Last year's Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Benefits Improvement Act of 2000, BIPA, provided some relief by delaying the cuts to help teaching hospitals cover the costs of caring for sicker, more complicated patients. Today's provision would make that relief permanent by freezing the indirect medical education adjustments percentage at 6.5 percent.

In addition, teaching hospitals throughout the State would benefit, including rural hospitals such as Kingston Hospital, Benedictine Hospital, Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital Medical Center, Olean General Hospital, and Hepburn Medical Center in Ogdensburg, NY.

Today's legislation is essential to ensuring that our Nation's older and disabled patients can continue to receive the high quality of care that they deserve. I look forward to working with my colleagues and the administration to address this and other important health care priorities.

REMEMBERING ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize that May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, and I want to acknowledge the many ac-

complishments and contributions that people of Asian and Pacific Island descent have made to Minnesota and to our country.

Their many different talents, cultures, and histories have played important roles in building and strengthening our country, and they have exemplified the important traditions of hard work, respect for family and elders, and the value of a quality education.

Since their arrival in this country, they have believed strongly in the American Dream and in better opportunities for those who seek them. These qualities have enabled them to overcome adversity and discrimination, and allowed them to achieve enormous successes in virtually every field.

The complexion of my home state of Minnesota is changing dramatically. We have seen a sharp increase in the number of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who reside in our state, and we welcome the opportunity to continue to work with them to create a better Minnesota.

In one of my first meetings as a new Senator, I had the opportunity to visit with the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, and I learned of the many important contributions which this community makes to my home state. They shared with me not only their successes, but also their continuing struggles to ensure that Minnesotans of Asian and Pacific Island descent have the best education, housing, health care, and job opportunities possible.

I would like to acknowledge just a few of the Minnesotans of Asian or Pacific Island descent whose efforts have made Minnesota a better place to live and work. In the political arena, the Honorable Satveer Chaudhary became the first Asian American to be elected to the Minnesota state legislature and now serves as the highest-ranking elected official of Indian descent in the nation. Ms. Zarina Baber helped establish the volunteer based clinic in Fridley known as Al'Shifa, which provides culturally specific health care free of charge to needy or uninsured patients. Ms. Baber volunteers as the director of this clinic and has developed partnerships with area hospitals and clinics. Mr. Lee Pao Xiong recently became the first non-African American President of Minneapolis' Urban Coalition. He has served on President Clinton's Commission on Asian and Pacific Islanders, and has been a leader in helping the Hmong community to make the transition to mainstream America while preserving the integrity of their own culture. Wai Lee, a devoted mother of four, as well as an active member of the Faribault community, has skillfully combined motherhood with activism. She has volunteered in the Faribault community for many years, taught English as a Second Language, and developed a mentor program to involve children and help them with their English skills. Venture