

THE RETIRED PAY RESTORATION
ACT OF 2001

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would like to proceed in morning business to talk about some legislation that I sponsored. It is called the Retired Pay Restoration Act or 2001.

I introduced this bill last Congress. Out of the 100 percent of the things we needed to do on behalf of veterans, we maybe did 1 or 2 percent. There is still 98 percent to do.

This legislation addresses a 110-year injustice against over 560,000 of our Nation's veterans. We now have 64 cosponsors to S. 170. It clearly illustrates bipartisan support for this legislation.

My disappointment, though, is that this legislation passed was part of the budget. It was stripped out of the so-called "conference" that took place on this bill. That is unfair.

Every day in America—today, tomorrow, and the next day—1,000 World War II veterans die. This legislation is meant to help them.

What does this legislation do? We in Congress have repeatedly forced the bravest men and women in our Nation—retired career veterans—to forego receipt of a portion of their retired pay if they happen to also receive disability pay from an injury that occurred in the line of duty.

If you are an old veteran and you have a service-connected disability and you retired from the military, you cannot draw your disability pension. Is that fair? No, it is not fair. S. 170 will permit retired members of the Armed Services who also have a service-connected disability to receive military retirement pay and also the disability compensation. That seems fair to me.

Also, if a veteran who had a service-connected disability retired from some other aspect of the Federal Government—from the Congress, from the Department of Energy, or from the Interior Department—they could draw both pensions. But if you retire from the military, you can't. That doesn't seem fair to me.

We are currently losing, as I have indicated, over 1,000 World War II veterans every day. Every day we delay acting on this legislation means that we have denied fundamental fairness to thousands and thousands of our gallant armed service men and women. They will never have the ability to enjoy their well-deserved pensions. They earned them. If they spent 20 or more years in the military and were shot, or in some way hurt as a result of the service-connected disability, they earned that. That is an understatement.

As to the budget which we have heard so much about, the "budgeeteers" should be ashamed of themselves. They took this out of the budget. It was passed on the floor, and they stripped it from the budget.

I want everyone to know that we have 64 cosponsors. It is bipartisan. I am going to look for ways of having this legislation adopted by the Congress and sent to the President.

Everyone should be alerted—Senator LEVIN, Senator WARNER—that I am going to do everything I can to make sure it is on the Defense authorization bill. I am going to do everything I can—I say to Senator INOUYE and Senator STEVENS—to make sure it is on the military appropriations bill. It is just unfair.

This legislation should be passed. Every day 1,000 people are denied basic fairness in this country.

Today we have about 1.5 million of our finest serving in the defense of this Nation. The United States military is unmatched in power, training, and ability. This great Nation is recognized as the world's only superpower—a status which is largely due to the sacrifices that veterans made during the last century. But rather than honoring their commitment and bravery, the Federal Government has instead chosen to perpetuate a 110-year-old injustice.

Quite simply, that is disgraceful. It is an injustice. It has existed for far too long. We must correct it. I am going to do everything I can to make sure that this passes in some form and is sent to the President to be signed.

COMMENDING SENATE PAGES

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, on behalf of the Senate, I rise to bid farewell to our current class of Senate pages, who have served the Senate with distinction over the last five months. On behalf of the entire Senate, I would like to thank them for their fine work and tireless efforts to help the Senate run smoothly.

This class of pages has served during an historic time in the United States Senate. When they arrived, we were still in the midst of a close presidential election, one that held the fate of the Senate in balance. When the election was decided, they served in an unprecedented evenly divided Senate. And as they leave, they have been witness to a change in who is the majority. They've even served during a rare weekend session. And through all of these challenges, they have maintained excellent academic records.

Most people do not know of the rigorous nature of a Senate page's life. On a typical day, the pages rise early and are in school by 6:00 a.m. After several hours of classes, they come to the Capitol to prepare the Senate Chamber for the day's session by providing each Senator with a copy of the Senate Legislative and Executive Calendars, the legislation under consideration, and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, as well as any other document a Senator might request.

During the remainder of the day, they run numerous errands and perform a myriad of tasks, including providing Senators with the appropriate bills and resolution under consideration, obtaining documents one of us may want to refer to during a debate, running errands between the Capitol

and the Senate Office Buildings, and helping out at our weekly caucus lunches.

The pages stay here as long as we're here, no matter how late. Once the Senate has concluded business for the day, the pages return to their dorm to prepare for the next day's classes, and, we hope, to get some much-needed sleep. Despite the hectic schedule, they perform their duties cheerfully and efficiently.

The presence of the pages on the Senate floor serves as a constant reminder to all of us here that the legislative work we perform is not just for our generation, but for the children and young people of our Nation as well.

It is my hope that we have given the pages some insight into the need for individuals to become involved in community and civic activities. The future of our nation strongly depends on the generation who will follow up in this august body. Perhaps a number of the current group of pages will one day return here to serve as members of the United States Senate.

These young men and women have been an integral part of our daily life here in the Senate and they have faced quite a few challenges in this historic year.

Again, we wish the pages a fond farewell. I hope that they will take their experiences here and return to their hometowns as better citizens with a greater appreciation for public service. Speaking on behalf of the Senate, we wish them well in whatever endeavors they choose.

I ask unanimous consent that a list of the current class of pages be printed in the RECORD.

The list follows:

SENATE PAGES

Libby Benton, Michigan; Steve Hoffman, Vermont; Alexis Gassenhuber, Wisconsin; Kelsey Walter, South Dakota; Michael Henderson, South Dakota; Kathryn Bangs, South Dakota; Tristan Butterfield, Montana; Lyndsey Williams, Illinois; Joshua Baca, New Mexico; Andrew Smith, Texas.

CHILDREN NEED CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions recently released a new report titled "All Children Need Children's Hospitals" that explores how essential children's hospitals are to the health of all children. The report highlights the fact that—whether they ever enter a children's hospital or not—all children benefit from the far-reaching work of children's hospitals.

In the clinical care area, freestanding children's hospitals—which make up less than 1 percent of all hospitals—treat a disproportionately large share of children with highly specialized or complex conditions. For example, 46 percent of children with cancer, 45 percent of the children with cystic fibrosis, and 52 percent of children needing

heart or lung transplants are cared for by these hospitals. In their own communities, these percentages jump even higher.

In addition to providing the most specialized and medically advanced care available, children's hospitals deliver preventive and primary care as well. They are the safety net hospital and community provider for low-income children. For example, across the Nation, more than 8 million outpatient visits and 1.6 million emergency room visits are made to children's hospitals and their community clinics annually. At Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, over 200,000 outpatient visits and more than 70,000 emergency/urgent care visits occurred in 2000. Medicaid accounts for more than 45 percent of the inpatient days at children's hospitals, which devote nearly half of their care to low-income children. In fact, a children's hospital, on average, provides 10 times as much inpatient care to low-income children as any other urban hospital.

For all these children, the doctors, nurses and health professionals at children's hospitals take a family-centered approach to health care. Parents are considered partners in the care and treatment of their children. Children are made to feel comfortable and safe—feelings reinforced by in-room accommodations for families and age-appropriate patient rooms and playrooms. Doctors, pediatric nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, dentists, and child life specialists are among the health professionals taught by children's hospitals to put families first.

Children's hospitals train a substantial number of our children's doctors. The freestanding children's hospitals—again, which comprise less than 1 percent of all hospitals—train 30 percent of all pediatricians, half of all pediatric specialists, and a substantial majority of pediatric researchers. Their teaching programs are essential to the future of the pediatric workforce and to the future of children's health care. The promise of biomedical research cannot be realized for children without researchers at the bench.

The medical research and breakthrough discoveries conducted at children's hospitals benefit all children, preventing illnesses as well as advancing treatment. Children's hospitals have been the sites of many historic firsts, such as the discovery of polio vaccine. Children's hospitals have led the way in fetal surgery, transplants, advancements in cardiac treatment, and in the care of more common conditions such as asthma. Their contributions to cancer research have led to great progress in curing childhood cancers that were untreatable just a few decades ago.

Together with pediatric departments of university medical centers, children's hospitals account for 30 percent of all NIH-funded pediatric research; and they train the great majority of future pediatric researchers. Virtually

all children's hospitals participate in clinical trials or health services research. Research moves from bench to bedside rapidly at children's hospitals, allowing new discoveries to transform more children's lives for the better. And these discoveries not only benefit children, but adults as well. The answers to many costly and painful health problems that affect adults like diabetes and obesity, can often be found in childhood. And many of the principles discovered in the study and treatment of children diseases, such as cancer, have also been applicable to adults.

Finally, children's hospitals' mission to improve the health of children throughout the nation doesn't stop at the hospital door. By developing innovative programs like "SAFE KIDS," children's hospitals focus community attention on children's health issues, improving child health through prevention as well as cutting-edge care. They work with schools and communities to provide valuable services to children with special health care needs and children facing abuse.

I understand that children's hospitals are for all children, perhaps better than most, because I have learned that from my children's hospitals at home. Missouri is blessed with top-notch children's hospitals. Their doors are open to any child in need of care. Their efforts in advocacy and community work are directed to the health care needs of all children. Their missions in education and research reach all children as well.

Children are different. They are not small adults. And no institution knows this better than a children's hospital. They provide the highest quality medical care, day after day, to children from all parts of the country, from the most distant rural areas to the closest inner city neighborhoods. They are essential to the health and health care of children today and tomorrow.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY last month. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a heinous crime that occurred on August 8, 1990 in San Francisco, California. Chris Minor and Jonathan Ebert were attacked by four Skinheads who called them "faggots." Arrested and charged with assault were Skinheads Brandon Rosenberg, 19, and Thomas E. Miles, 21. Two juvenile females were also taken into custody. Rosenberg was arrested earlier in connection with an August 14 gay bashing in which he allegedly slapped David Robinson and threatened to beat him up.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation, we can change hearts and minds as well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

131ST FIGHTER WING

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize one of the greatest air-superiority Wings in the Nation and its great leaders. On June 9th, 2001 Colonel Michael G. Brandt assumes command of the 131st Fighter Wing, Lambert Field, Missouri from Colonel Bob Edmonds. This Wing has tremendous aviation history and has 1,300 citizen-airmen who are dedicated and committed to service of their Nation.

The 131st Fighter Wing's mission is to achieve and maintain air superiority with the F-15 Eagle—the finest air superiority plane in the world today. The Wing has been called into service to battle the "Great Flood" of 1993 and has deployed to Incirlik, Turkey in support of Operation Northern Watch. The Wing has also supported Aerospace Expeditionary Force Operations, deploying to Southeast Asia and Europe to support Operation Southern Watch. The accomplishments of the leadership and the men and women of this Wing have maintained the great heritage of Lambert Field, and kept it one of the finest Wings in the Nation.

Colonel Edmonds will relinquish command of the 131st to Colonel Brandt. Colonel Edmonds graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1979 as a distinguished graduate and the top cadet in the Civil Engineering major. He was selected for a Guggenheim Fellowship at Columbia University and graduated in 1980 with a Master of Science Degree in Civil Engineering. Colonel Edmonds completed Undergraduate Pilot Training at Columbus AFB, Mississippi, as a distinguished graduate, and was selected to fly the F-15 Eagle. He has served in numerous flying positions, both as an instructor pilot and a commander, and led 45 combat missions with the 53rd Tactical Fighter Squadron during Operation Desert Storm.

Colonel Edmonds deserves our utmost thanks too for his tremendous leadership of the 131st. The men and women of the unit and the community will be forever grateful for his contributions and patriotism. We will soon be seeing Colonel Edmonds on a much more regular basis, as he will be walking the halls of Congress as the Chief of Senate Legislative Affairs. His tremendous success will certainly follow him there and I know we all look forward to working with him in that capacity.

Assuming command of the 131st is certainly a highlight in Colonel Brandt's career. He graduated from Officer Candidate School at Lackland Air