

Secretary's mandate to provide outreach to veterans, dependents, and survivors; and

(2) such assistance should include—

(A) using the December 2002 Social Security cost-of-living adjustment notice as a means of publicizing the VA Health Benefits Hotline and the fact that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides comprehensive health care, including prescription medications, to veterans;

(B) using Social Security award notices for retirement insurance and disability insurance benefits to publicize the VA Health Benefits Hotline and the fact that the VA provides comprehensive health care, including prescription medications, to veterans;

(C) distributing VA publications that describe the cash, health, and other benefits available through the VA to all Social Security Administration field offices so that these publications may be provided to members of the public who visit such offices; and

(D) broadcasting information to all employees at the Social Security Administration who have contact with the public regarding the health care benefits (including the availability of prescription medications as part of treatment) available through the VA, each pension and compensation program of the VA, and other benefits available through the VA so that employees at the Social Security Administration can inform veterans about VA programs.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I rise today to submit a Senate resolution calling on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to work with the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration to better inform the Nation's veterans and their dependents about benefits available from the VA.

In recent months, we have seen considerable legislative activity designed to improve outreach to veterans and their dependents. The President recently signed into law the Veterans' Survivor Benefits Improvement Act. This Act, for the first time, provides the VA with a legislative mandate to provide outreach and assistance to dependents of veterans. In addition to this legislation, several of my distinguished colleagues in the Senate have introduced the Veterans' Right to Know Act. This Act would require the VA, once it received an application for any benefit, to inform a veteran or a dependent about ALL VA benefits. The Veterans' Right to Know Act would also require the VA to develop an annual outreach plan by working with service organizations representing veterans.

However, I know that the VA is concerned that some of these initiatives are bureaucratic requirements that would divert resources from programs that directly serve the veteran population. I understand the concerns of the VA and let me make it clear that I am not here today to criticize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the employees of the VA. I consider the Secretary and his employees to be some of the most dedicated public servants in the Nation.

Instead, I am here today to ask for the Secretary's help and to ask him to consider our perspective as legislators. We have passed legislation to provide health care and economic security to

our Nation's veterans and yet we often hear from constituents who are not aware of the benefits and services the VA provides.

One of the most important benefits the VA provides is comprehensive health care, including low-cost prescription medications. Unfortunately, many veterans believe they have to be disabled or poor to enroll in the VA health care system. The reality is that any honorably discharged veteran can enroll in VA health care.

Let me tell you about a message recently posted on the Web site of Seniors USA. The message is from Art Mazer, who is the Coordinator for the Gray Panthers of Greater Boston, Mr. Mazer writes that he has just enrolled in the VA health care system and will now receive his medications for just \$2 per month from the VA pharmacy. Mr. Mazer, who happened to find out about these pharmacy benefits through an email newsletter of the Social Security Administration, refers to the prescription drug benefits provided by the VA as "one of the best kept secrets" in the government. Although I applaud the Social Security Administration for its informative newsletter and I am glad Mr. Mazer is sharing the information with other seniors, I am concerned that VA health care is being described on an Internet site for seniors as one of the best kept secrets of the government.

In some ways, it is appropriate that Mr. Mazer found out about VA benefits from the Social Security Administration. Remarkably, two out of every five veterans receive Social Security. Today, more than nine million veterans are on the Social Security rolls. Over the next several years, we will see millions of Vietnam Era veterans being brought into Social Security's disability and retirement programs.

The Social Security Administration has one of the most extensive systems of public communication in our government. Each year, this Agency sends out tens of millions of notices to its beneficiaries. These notices inform the public about Social Security, Medicare, and other vital government programs. Every workday, 100,000 citizens visit the Social Security Administration's 1,300 field offices around the country. The primary role of field office employees is to administer the Social Security programs, but we know from our disabled and elderly constituents that it is often a Social Security employee who tells them about a program to help pay their Medicare bills or a program to help them meet their food expenses. Simply put, the Social Security Administration is on the front lines in our battle to alleviate poverty among our disabled and elderly citizens.

The Resolution I am submitting today calls on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to request assistance from the Commissioner of Social Security in fulfilling the Secretary's mandate to provide outreach to veterans and their dependents. The Resolution outlines four initiatives, but let me talk briefly about just one.

Each year the Social Security Administration mails 45 million cost-of-living adjustment notices to its beneficiaries. The primary purpose of these COLA notices is to tell beneficiaries how much their benefits will increase. However, the Social Security Administration has used a portion of these notices in the past to provide information on government health care programs, such as Medicare. It is my hope that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs will request that a portion of these COLA notices include information on the VA health care system, including its provision of low-cost prescription drugs. The VA, to its credit, has developed a Health Benefits Hotline, 1-877-222-VETS, so that veterans can find out about and enroll in VA health care. The COLA notices are an effective way to publicize this Hotline. We know that it requires time to prepare for these outreach initiatives, but I am hopeful that this initiative could be implemented for the December 2002 COLA notices. This gives the Secretary over a year to work with the Social Security Administration to implement the initiative.

The initiatives outlined in this Resolution are not costly or intrusive because they build on the already-existing capabilities of the Federal Government. And yet, these initiatives will inform millions of veterans and their dependents about VA programs.

The current Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Anthony J. Principi, is a combat-decorated veteran. I know he is deeply committed to serving veterans and their families. So, today, through this Resolution, I am asking him to take some practical steps to ensure that our veterans and their families are fully informed about benefits and services provided by the VA. I feel sure that the Social Security Administration, an Agency with a well-earned reputation for serving the disabled and the elderly, will respond favorably to a request for assistance by Secretary Principi.

SENATE RESOLUTION 153—RECOGNIZING THE ENDURING CONTRIBUTIONS, HEROIC ACHIEVEMENTS, AND DEDICATED WORK OF SHIRLEY ANITA CHISHOLM

Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. DODD, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 153

Whereas Shirley Anita Chisholm has devoted her life to public service;

Whereas Shirley Anita Chisholm served in the New York State Assembly from 1964 to 1968;

Whereas Shirley Anita Chisholm became the first African-American woman to be elected to Congress in 1968;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm was a fierce critic of the seniority system in Congress, protested her assignment in 1969 to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of

Representatives, and won reassignment to a committee of the House of Representatives on which she could better serve her inner-city district in Brooklyn, New York;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm served as a Member of Congress from 1968 until 1983;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm proposed legislation to increase funding for child care facilities in order to allow such facilities to extend their hours of operation and provide services to both middle-class and low-income families;

Whereas in 1972 Congresswoman Chisholm became the first African-American and the first woman to be a candidate for the nomination of the Democratic Party for the office of President;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm campaigned in the primaries of 12 States, won 28 delegates, and received 152 first ballot votes at the national convention for the nomination of the Democratic Party for the office of President;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm has fought throughout her life for fundamental rights for women, children, seniors, African-Americans, Hispanics, and other minority groups;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm has been a committed advocate for many progressive causes, including improving education, ending discrimination in hiring practices, increasing the availability of child care, and expanding the coverage of the Federal minimum wage laws to include domestic employment;

Whereas in addition to the service of Congresswoman Chisholm as a legislator, Congresswoman Chisholm has worked to improve society as a nursery school teacher, director of a child care facility, consultant for the New York Department of Social Services, and educator; and

Whereas it is appropriate that the dedicated work and outstanding accomplishments of Congresswoman Chisholm be recognized during the month of March, which is National Women's History Month: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the enduring contributions and heroic achievements of Shirley Anita Chisholm; and

(2) appreciates the dedicated work of Shirley Anita Chisholm to improve the lives and status of women in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 154—COMMENDING ELIZABETH B. LETCHWORTH FOR HER SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE

Mr. LOTT (for himself and Mr. DASCHLE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 154

Whereas Elizabeth B. Letchworth has dutifully served the United States Senate for over 25 years;

Whereas Elizabeth's service to the Senate began with her appointment as a United States Senate page in 1975;

Whereas Elizabeth continued her work as a special Legislative assistant, a Republican Cloakroom assistant, and as a Republican Floor Assistant;

Whereas in 1995 Elizabeth was appointed by the Majority Leader and elected by the Senate to be Secretary for the Majority;

Whereas Elizabeth was the first woman to be elected as Republican Secretary;

Whereas Elizabeth was the youngest person to be elected the Secretary for the Majority at the age of 34. Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the United States Senate commends Elizabeth Letchworth for her

many years of service to the United States Senate, and wishes to express its deep appreciation and gratitude for her contributions to the institution. In addition, the Senate wishes Elizabeth and her husband Ron all the best in their future endeavors.

SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit a copy of this resolution to Elizabeth Letchworth.

SENATE RESOLUTION 155—ELECTING DAVID J. SCHIAPPA OF MARYLAND AS SECRETARY OF THE MINORITY OF THE SENATE

Mr. LOTT submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 155

Resolved, That David J. Schiappa of Maryland be, and he is hereby, elected Secretary for the Minority of the Senate effective August 29, 2001.

SENATE RESOLUTION 156—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE REGIONAL HUMANITIES INITIATIVE OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES BE NAMED FOR EUDORA WELTY

Mr. COCHRAN (for himself and Mr. LOTT) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 156

Whereas Eudora Welty was the last of the 4 literary giants (William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, and Richard Wright) who shaped both the Southern Literary Renaissance and American literature in the 20th century;

Whereas this grand lady of American literature both embraced and transcended the South;

Whereas in the words of critic Maureen Howard, "It is not the South we find in her stories, it is Eudora Welty's south, a region that feeds her imagination and a place we come to trust";

Whereas critic Maureen Howard noted that Eudora Welty was "a Southerner as Chekhov was a Russian, because place provides them with a reality, a reality as difficult, mysterious, and impermanent as life";

Whereas Eudora Welty's literary legacy includes more than a dozen novels, collections of short stories, essays, and books of photography;

Whereas for this impressive literary canon Eudora Welty was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1973, the French Legion of Honor in 1996, the PEN/Malamud Award in 1992, 6 O'Henry Awards, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the National Endowment for the Humanities Frankel Medal, The National Book Critics Award, and the Gold Medal of the National Institute of Arts and Letters;

Whereas Eudora Welty was the first living writer to be included in the prestigious Library of America series that features American literary giants such as Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Henry James, Willa Cather, Edith Wharton, Edgar Allan Poe, and William Faulkner;

Whereas 2 of Eudora Welty's books, The Robber Bridegroom and The Ponder Heart, were adapted for the stage in New York;

Whereas the place in which Eudora Welty lived, Jackson, Mississippi, was central to her work as a writer;

Whereas Jackson, Mississippi was, in Eudora Welty's words, "like a fire that never goes out";

Whereas for Eudora Welty, place was "the stuff of fiction, as close to our living lives as the earth we can pick up and rub between our fingers, something we can feel and smell... We know what the place has made of these people through generations. We have a sense of continuity and that, I think, comes from place.";

Whereas no writer was ever more beloved, or more adored by her readers who avidly followed her life and work;

Whereas Eudora Welty deeply loved family stories and recalled how "Long before I wrote stories, I listened for stories... when their elders sit and begin, children are just waiting and hoping for one to come out, like a mouse from a hole.";

Whereas Eudora Welty's work focused on family life, including weddings, reunions, and funerals;

Whereas Eudora Welty's career began with the study of region and place when she worked as a writer and photographer for the Works Progress Administration, work that later inspired her fiction and literary essays;

Whereas these writings help each of us better understand the humanities and their ties to region and place;

Whereas Eudora Welty's work inspired the National Endowment for the Humanities to launch its Regional Humanities Initiative through 20 planning grants that have been awarded to institutions in the States of Arizona, California, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin;

Whereas like the gentle rain that fell across Mississippi on the day of Eudora Welty's funeral, the Regional Humanities Initiative nourishes the soil of American culture and its roots in our regions;

Whereas the Regional Humanities Initiative honors the places from which we each come and preserves our history and culture for future generations; and

Whereas Eudora Welty believed deeply in the noble work of the Regional Humanities Initiative and her name will inspire future generations to understand and celebrate the places that shape our Nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the Regional Humanities Initiative be named for Eudora Welty.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, today I am introducing a Sense of the Senate Resolution honoring the memory of Eudora Welty, the famed Mississippi author who died last week. Senator LOTT has joined me in sponsoring this resolution renaming the Regional Humanities Initiative at the National Endowment for the Humanities, NEH, the Eudora Welty Regional Humanities Initiative.

One of the great themes of Miss Welty's writings is a sense of place. It is fitting then that the Regional Humanities Initiative that honors the places from which we come and will preserve our history and culture for future generations be named for her. In fact, a quote from Miss Welty's work is used in the NEH guidelines for this initiative and I would like to share those words with you: "It is by knowing where you stand that you grow able to judge where you are. Place absorbs our earliest notice and attention. It