

seek ways to improve the administrative agencies and legal courts that serve such vulnerable children.

The bills are designed to encourage students graduating with social work degrees and law degrees to spend several years working in the child welfare system. Eligible students would receive loan forgiveness for working in child welfare agencies and courts for abused and neglected children. The amount of loan forgiveness would increase over time to reward experience, and to retain social workers and attorneys in the system.

Every day, approximately 500,000 children are in the foster care system. Services to such children need to be improved so that every child's health and safety is paramount, and every child secures a permanent home. These priorities were established in the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act, thanks to the leadership of Senator DEWINE and a bipartisan coalition. To achieve such bold goals, we must have trained, committed social workers and skilled attorneys serving such children and their families.

There is a compelling need to invest in social workers. The turnover rate for child welfare agencies has doubled in the past decade. Making decisions about a child's health and safety is a serious challenge, and we need more experienced and trained social workers to serve children and their families.

Many social workers are burdened with a staggering caseload. The number of social workers per children in the child welfare system varies widely from state to state, and not all states even report their child protective services workforce data. Still, we know there is a compelling need in many places. The Child Maltreatment 2000 Report published by the Department of Health and Human Services indicates that the national average is 130 children per investigative workers, and several states acknowledge that workers have over 200 children to monitor and assess. Obviously, we need to recruit and retain qualified social workers to serve children and families at risk.

Experienced attorneys are also needed to help manage the individual cases and to help ensure that the bold, new time frames established by the Adoption and Safe Families Act are met. Under this new law, courts face stricter requirements to monitor and make decisions about a child's safety, health, and placement in a permanent home. This means qualified attorneys need to work with the courts, the agencies, and the families.

In West Virginia, and across our country, children and families in the child welfare system need and deserve qualified social workers and attorneys. Senator DEWINE's bill to offer student loan forgiveness would provide the right incentive to recruit and retain new professionals in the system. It would be a meaningful addition to the Higher Education Act reauthorization.

SOWING THE SEEDS FOR DEMOCRACY IN CROATIA

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to bring to my colleagues' attention the Civitas International Civic Education Exchange Program—a program that is helping to promote democratic principles in emerging and established democracies throughout the world.

The Civitas Exchange Program, administered by the Center for Civic Education and funded by the U.S. Department of Education under the Education for Democracy Act, engages educators from around the world in the development of effective civic education initiatives that can be implemented in their own countries. The program provides international leaders in civic education the opportunity to learn from one another and to assist each other in improving education for democracy in their nations.

The Civitas Exchange Program makes use of the experience, expertise, and programmatic offerings of U.S.-based State and national civic education centers by linking them in partnerships with public and private sector entities in emerging and advanced democracies. The partnerships serve to institutionalize civic education in these nations, creating working relationships that lead to tangible results for both American and international students and teachers. Today the Civitas Exchange Program is operating in 30 countries linked with 22 American States.

One of those partnerships involves my home State of Oregon, and the States of Delaware and Maryland, linked with the country of Croatia. Marilyn Cover, the executive director of the Classroom Law Project in Portland, OR, manages the partnership. Ms. Cover recently brought a delegation of American teachers and Croatian educators to Capitol Hill to observe our system of government first hand. I am pleased to recognize the two Oregonian teachers participating in the exchange, Bert Key from Sandy Union High School in Sandy, OR and Maggie McSwiggen, from Vocational Village in Portland, OR. I would also like to recognize the Croatian teachers in the delegation, Jadranka Kostanjak from Zagreb, Jasminka Zagorac from Zagreb, and Natalija Palcic from Split.

These teachers, and others from Delaware and Maryland, are currently working with teachers from Croatia to develop a series of lessons comparing the Constitutions of the United States and Croatia, examining political parties within each country, and exploring ideas of personal and civic responsibility for use in their respective classes. Begun during a summer writing program, the teachers continue to refine their lessons through team teaching in classrooms in both the United States and Croatia. It is an excellent example of the reciprocal nature of the exchange, which provides benefits to American students and international students alike.

The ideas exchanged in Oregon's partnership have led to at least two significant developments with the support of the Croatian Ministry of Education and Sport: first, as part of the exchange, an American civics curriculum, Foundations of Democracy program on justice, has been translated and is now a requirement in Croatian preschools and primary schools; second, We the People . . . Project Citizen, an American civic education program which engages young people in learning how to monitor and influence public policy, has become a requirement in grades 7 and 8 for secondary schools in Croatia.

The Civitas Exchange Program is an excellent example of how programs supported by the federal government can help achieve U.S. foreign policy objectives by helping emerging democracies develop a political culture supportive of democratic values, principles, and institutions. I wish to thank the Center for Civic Education for their successful administration of the Civitas program and applaud Oregonian Marilyn Cover for her excellent work in the project.

RETIREMENT OF SENATOR FRED THOMPSON

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute and recognize the accomplishments of a colleague who will be retiring at the end of this term. Senator FRED THOMPSON has represented Tennessee in the Senate for 8 years. During his tenure, he has been an important advocate for a wide range of legislative reform activities.

Throughout his Senate career, Senator THOMPSON has fought for protecting our national security, making government more efficient, and improving programs that are important to America's families, such as Social Security and Medicare. Senator THOMPSON has also been nationally recognized for his expertise in international affairs as was evidenced by his recent nomination to the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations.

As the ranking member of the Committee on Governmental Affairs, FRED THOMPSON held more than a dozen hearings on important national security issues, including missile defense technology and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As a result of his efforts, Senator THOMPSON played a key role in bringing the issue of weapons proliferation to the forefront of the national agenda.

In addition, FRED THOMPSON has been the leader in many efforts to reform and improve government. He has strongly supported proposals to streamline the regulatory process and to ensure the cost-effectiveness and benefit of regulatory programs. As the primary author of the Government Information Security Act, he also championed efforts to enhance the security of government computer systems and to strengthen privacy protection on Federal Web sites.

Finally, as his colleague on the Finance Committee, I had the opportunity to work with FRED to address the challenges facing Social Security and Medicare. Among the efforts we jointly supported, a primary concern we have shared is improving the long-term solvency of these important social programs. As a Finance Committee member, as well as in the other roles he has served, Senator THOMPSON's work has been thoughtful, and our Nation is a better place because of his efforts.

Most of all, I will miss Senator THOMPSON's unfailing good humor. We shared many laughs as we bantered back and forth about his future in film and television. I will really miss his sense of humor and basic decency.

Mr. President, for these and many other reasons, I have been honored to serve with FRED THOMPSON. I would like to join my colleagues in wishing the Senator and his family the best in the future and in paying tribute to his contributions to the Senate and our Nation. I wish him well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO VASHON HIGH SCHOOL

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to the 75th anniversary of Vashon High School. In the early quarter of the 20th century, the high school that most African-American students attended in St. Louis was overcrowded and quite a distance from their homes. Consequently, in 1922, a citizens group called the Central School Patron Association led by Reverend George Stevens and other community alliances began formulating plans for a second high school designated for African-American students. On September 6, 1927, Vashon High School opened and has been educating and changing the lives of students since. Over time, Vashon High School has established itself as a premier educational institute, known for its athletics as well as academics.

There are several outstanding individuals who have contributed to the founding and success of Vashon High School. The school was named for a family with a long tradition of struggle and sacrifice dedicated to the importance of education while battling to secure civil and human rights for African-Americans. Specifically, the school was named for George B. Vashon, 1824–1878, the first African-American graduate of Oberlin College, OH in 1844, and his son John B. Vashon, 1859–1924, an outstanding educator in the city of St. Louis for 34 years, James W. Meyers served as the first principal of Vashon from 1927–1932 and Otto Bohanan, a member of the faculty, composed the school song, "Vashon We Love". Many students honed their talents, skills, and abilities to become future educators and community leaders from the positive influence and support of these and other influential faculty members.

Over the past 75 years, Vashon High School has undergone changes and relocated to several different locations, but irrespective of physical location, the spirit of Vashon High School continues to inspire students to pursue their dreams and achieve their goals. Congratulations to the students, faculty, and alumni of Vashon High School.●

NEAL GONZALES

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to say a few words about Neal Gonzales, a prominent new Mexico labor leader who died in late October.

In the early 1970's when I became acquainted with the working of the new Mexico Legislature, I also became acquainted with Neal Gonzales, a powerful presence in the halls of power in our state. He was the representative of labor and as such his influence was felt in most of the important legislative battles that were waged.

Neal was a true professional at his job. Liked and respected by all, he was a formidable adversary as those who found themselves opposing him soon learned.

I learned much from watching Neal Gonzales work as the advocate for the working people of New Mexico. He kept his focus on the impact of legislation on the lives of those he represented. He did his homework and, more often than not, he prevailed.

With his death, many of us in New Mexico have lost not only a valued friend, but the working families of our State have lost a tireless champion.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. LURA POWELL

• Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to say thank you to one of the true leaders in the Washington state science community, who has recently announced that she will be stepping down from her position at the end of the year. I am speaking of Dr. Lura Powell, vice president of Battelle and Director of the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, PNNL, in Richland, WA.

During the past 2 years, Dr. Powell has developed a bold strategy to ensure that the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory will play a significant role in carrying out the missions of the Department of Energy as we move forward into the 21st century. The recent installation of two major pieces of equipment will position the laboratory to be a leader in molecular research—research that reaches across many disciplines, including environmental cleanup, national security, and the life sciences. The new 9.2 teraflops supercomputer and the 900-megahertz nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer, both of which are part of PNNL's Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory, will attract academia, industry, and other Government researchers to the lab in an atmosphere of collaboration and discovery. I had

the opportunity to attend the dedication of the NMR spectrometer on March 28, 2002. This equipment is poised to play a central role in the fast-approaching revolution in systems biology, the seeds for which were sown by the amazing success of the Human Genome Project.

Dr. Powell has set out to establish a systems biology program for PNNL that will position the laboratory to play a significant role in the Department of Energy's Genomes to Life initiative and to participate in the National Institutes of Health biomedical mission. Congress has consistently supported increased funding for scientific research in the biomedical sciences at NIH, and there is an equally important role for the Department of Energy to play in this field. Genomics research holds great promise for unraveling many previously intractable scientific problems, and will one day lead to the development of technologies that will help address some of our nation's most pressing challenges: carbon sequestration and climate change, the national security risks posed by bioterrorism, even clean and sustainable energy production. The Genomes to Life program will indeed enhance the Department of Energy's ability to fulfill its many diverse missions, and PNNL—thanks in large part to Dr. Powell—is poised to be a prime contributor to this initiative.

In her term as Director of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Dr. Powell has reached out to create new partnerships within Washington State to support this agenda. They include the University of Washington, Washington State University, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and the Institute of Systems Biology. Meanwhile, conversations are ongoing with still other institutions in the Pacific Northwest that will further expand PNNL's collaborations. These efforts will bring a strong bioscience presence to the State of Washington, provide economic sustainability to the Tri-Cities area and lead to scientific discoveries that will ultimately benefit this Nation as a whole. I want to recognize Dr. Powell for her vision and commitment to public service and wish her much success in her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. VINCENT ZECCHINO

• Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I recognize Dr. Vincent Zecchino and his wife, Julia, for the numerous contributions they have made to the field of medicine in Rhode Island and throughout the world. I am pleased to say that after a lifetime of achievement, Rhode Island Hospital dedicated their newest facility as the Julia and Vincent Zecchino Pavilion on October 18, 2002.

After graduating from the University of Bologna Medical School in 1936 and completing his internship at the Long Island College Hospital in 1938, Dr.