

# STRENGTHENING THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH AND FIGHTING BIOTERRORISM

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about strengthening our medical care community against the threat of bioterrorism. As chairman of the Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services, I held a hearing in July 2001 where representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Health and Human Services discussed the activities underway by dedicated Federal employees across the Government to prepare our communities for a biological crisis. On October 17, 2001, I co-chaired a joint Subcommittee/Governmental Affairs Committee hearing to discuss further the public health implications of bioterrorism. Coincidentally the hearing was held on the same day the Hart Senate Office Building was shut down because of the anthrax attack.

Through these hearings, and several others held in both the House and Senate, we have learned that the Federal Government is not unprepared to deal with bioterrorism. However, preparedness levels are not uniform or consistent across the United States, and there are considerable and serious problems. As I said during our hearing in October, while not unprepared, America is clearly under prepared.

Now, almost 6 months to the day after the first anthrax letter arrived in Hart, I urge my colleagues to join me in sponsoring two initiatives that are modest in nature but which have profound impact on our fight against bioterrorism.

The first initiative, S. 1560 the Biological Agent-Environmental Detection Act, will increase our efforts to develop the necessary tools to minimize the impact of bioterrorism by reducing the number of people exposed and alerting authorities and medical personnel to a threat before symptoms occur. Current methods are not adequate to monitor the air, water, and food supply continuously in order to detect rapidly the presence of biological agents.

The Biological Agent-Environmental Detection Act establishes an inter-agency task force to coordinate public-private research in environmental monitoring and detection tools of bioterrorist agents. The act authorized appropriations totaling \$40 million to the Department of Health and Human Services to encourage cooperative agreements between Federal Government and industry or academic laboratory centers, and pursue new technologies, approaches and programs to identify clandestine laboratory locations. The act also establishes a means of testing, verifying and calibrating new detection and surveillance tools and techniques developed by the private sector. Secretary of Health and Human Services Thompson supported this legislation and the authorization amount during the Subcommittee/Gov-

ernmental Affairs Committee Hearing in October.

Senator ROCKEFELLER and I introduced S. 1561 Strengthening bioterrorism preparedness through expanded National Disaster Medical System training programs. This measure provides training for health care workers for bioterrorism or any biological crisis. Strengthening the public health system is very important and is being addressed by several congressional and administrative initiatives. But public health does not translate necessarily to the medical community. Creating a critical line of defense against bioterrorism must involve health care professionals. Training of emergency medical technicians, physicians, and nurses has been hindered by a lack of economic incentives for hospitals and clinics to make available formal training opportunities.

In fiscal year 2001, the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, was appropriated \$800,000 to establish a training program for VA staff for the National Disaster Medical System, which is made up of VA and the Departments of Defense and Health and Human Services, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

One such training program, open to VA and Department of Defense staff as well as their community counterparts, took place earlier this year. The Akaka-Rockefeller bill expands this program by drawing on established partnerships between the 173 VA hospitals and community hospitals and using existing VA resources to implement a telemedicine and training program for local health care providers in bioterrorism preparedness and response.

In formulating a congressional response to bioterrorism, we must not forget the role our local and community hospitals would play in such a crisis. We must provide our professionals, public health officials, and emergency managers the earliest possible warning of pending outbreaks. I know our scientists and engineers can develop robust, effective, and accurate detection methods. Likewise, I believe we have the best and most dedicated health care staff in the world. They deserve to have the training and information needed to protect and treat Americans in instances of biological terrorism.●

## THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARDS

• Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, it is with a great deal of pride that I share with my colleagues the names of several Wyoming students who are being honored for their outstanding community service with a Prudential Spirit of Community Award.

These awards, in their seventh year, are presented by Prudential Financial, together with the National Association of Secondary School Principals. They honor the young people of our State who were nominated for their remark-

able acts of volunteerism. This year a record 28,000 young men and women were considered for this special award.

The two top youth volunteers from my State are Chelsie Gorzalka, 17, of Clearmont and Tabetha Waits, 12, of Rawlins. We can be proud of each of them for the difference they have made in their communities. Their efforts help to make their home towns better places to live.

Chelsie Gorzalka is a member of the Sheridan County Extension 4-H and a senior at Arvada/Clearmont High School. Chelsie received her nomination for the puppet plays she puts on around the State in an effort to educate our young children about the dangers of tobacco and drugs.

Tabetha Waits of Rawlins Middle School was nominated for her organization of "You Can't Break Our Stride" an all-school walkathon that raised nearly \$10,000 to assist the families of those who were affected by the September 11 terrorist attacks.

These two award winners, along with the two honorees who have received this award from each of the other States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, will receive a \$1,000 award, an engraved silver medallion, and a trip to the Nation's capital. During their stay here, ten from among that group of finalists will be named America's top youth volunteers for 2002.

In addition to Chelsie and Tabetha, I would like to congratulate our State's two distinguished finalists.

Cory Poulos, 18, was nominated by Natrona County High School. He organized and participated in a Roof-Sit fundraiser that collected more than \$5,000 to benefit "Families of Freedom," a post secondary education fund for children whose parents were injured or killed in the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Mark Sabec, 17, was nominated by Natrona County High School as well. He created "No Casualties," a peer and adult mentoring project aimed at reducing the number of school dropouts in his community.

Our congratulations goes out to these fine young people and to all those who participated in the awards program. Thanks to them, it is clear that our future is in good hands.●

## IN SUPPORT OF ONCOLOGY NURSES AND ONCOLOGY NURSING SOCIETY

• Mr. REED. Mr. President, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues the important role that oncology nurses play in the care of patients diagnosed with cancer.

This year alone 1,284,900 Americans will hear the words "You have cancer". Everyday, oncology nurses see the pain and suffering caused by cancer and understand the physical, emotional, and financial challenges that people with cancer face throughout their diagnosis and treatment.

Cancer is a complex, multifaceted, and chronic disease, and people with cancer are best served by a multidisciplinary health care team specialized in oncology care, including nurses who are certified in that specialty. Oncology nurses play a central role in the provision of quality cancer care as they are principally involved in the administration and monitoring of chemotherapy and the associated side-effects patients may experience. As anyone ever treated for cancer will tell you, oncology nurses are intelligent, well-trained, highly skilled, kind-hearted angels who provide quality clinical, psychosocial, and supportive care to patients and their families. In short, they are integral to our nation's cancer care delivery system.

The Oncology Nursing Society, ONS, is the largest organization of oncology health professionals in the world with more than 30,000 registered nurses and other health care professionals. Since 1975, the Oncology Nursing Society has been dedicated to excellence in patient care, teaching, research, administration and education in the field of oncology. The Society's mission is to promote excellence in oncology nursing and quality cancer care. To that end, ONS honors and maintains nursing's historical and essential commitment to advocacy for the public good by providing nurses and healthcare professionals with access to the highest quality educational programs, cancer-care resources, research opportunities, and networks for peer support.

The ONS has a chapter that serves the state of Rhode Island and the southeastern Massachusetts areas. This chapter helps them to continue to provide high quality cancer care to those patients and their families. On behalf of the people of Rhode Island, I want to express my appreciation for all that these amazing nurses do to advance the health and well-being of people with cancer and to further the practice of oncology nursing.

Despite significant breakthroughs in the treatment, early detection, and prevention of cancer, two-thirds of new cancer cases strike people over the age of 65 and the number of new cancer cases diagnosed among the elderly is projected to more than double by 2030 as the Baby Boom generation ages. The impact that cancer has on our nation, especially on the Medicare Program, cannot be underestimated or overlooked. In addition, more than 115,000 nursing positions will go unfilled by the year 2015—a factor which—taken with eroding Medicare payment for outpatient cancer care—further exacerbates the challenge of a growing number of cancer cases.

This week more than 5,000 oncology nurses from around the country have traveled to Washington, DC to attend the Oncology Nursing Society's 27th Annual Congress. This year's theme is aptly titled "The Many Faces of Oncology Nursing." The attendees will increase their knowledge of the newest

cancer treatments, learn the latest developments in cancer nursing research, and enhance their clinical skills and contribute to their professional development. In addition, approximately 550 of these nurses—representing 49 states—will come to Capitol Hill to discuss issues.

I would like to commend the Oncology Nursing Society for all of its efforts over the last 27 years and to thank the Society and its members for their ongoing commitment to improving and assuring access to quality cancer care for all cancer patients and their families.●

#### CYGNUS

● Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Cygnus, Inc. of Ponderay, ID on being recognized as one of Boeing's Top 25 Suppliers for the C-17.

As we all know, the C-17 is one of our key aircraft. Since it was first put into service in 1993, the C-17 has proven its worthiness as an extremely flexible airlift aircraft vital to our national security. Lately, Congress has reaffirmed its commitment to the C-17 by authorizing the purchase of additional aircraft. This is the right thing to do and I applaud my colleagues. In this day and age, we need a rapid-deployment airlift aircraft that can reach remote areas. The C-17 delivers and we must continue to support the program. Not only is it important for our national defense, it is money well spent because of quality subcontractors like Cygnus.

Cygnus has supplied top-notch parts for the C-17 since the first aircraft rolled off the assembly line. Today, Boeing and Cygnus celebrated the delivery of the parts for the 100th C-17 and Boeing will recognize Cygnus as one of the top 25 suppliers for the program.

Cygnus is a real success story of Idaho. It started in 1998 and since then has grown to sixty-five employees, forty-five of which work on its C-17 program. What is truly remarkable is they have taken those 65 employees, who didn't have experience in the aerospace manufacturing field, and turned them into a stellar team supplying our Nation's military. Because they have chosen to locate in Ponderay, ID, they have helped to diversify the local economy from a natural resource dependent economy to one that has a diverse industrial base.

Boeing is not the only one to recognize Cygnus' performance. In 2000, Region 10 of the Small Business Administration recognized Cygnus as the Subcontractor of the Year for their outstanding work on the U.S. Navy's F-18 E/F program.

Since September 11, our country has recognized, more than ever, the sacrifice that our Nation's military gives to protect our freedoms. Today, I also want to recognize the effort that our civilian laborers put into the effort. Much like Rosie the Riveter assisted

our troops in World War II, our civilian manufacturers of today, working with our military, will ensure the freedoms we all enjoy.●

#### REVEREND DR. BYRON HOWELL BROWN, JR.

● Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, the congregation of Christ Church and the Village of Garden City experienced a great loss when the Reverend Dr. Byron Howell Brown, Jr. passed away on Saturday, April 13. Father Brown, as he was affectionately known by all those who knew him, was a life-long resident of Garden City and was instituted as Rector of Christ Church in 1967. Throughout his tenure as Rector, Father Brown was the spiritual leader of several generations of parishioners, but it would be impossible to quantify how many lives he touched. Father Brown truly practiced the lessons that he preached. He was a faithful and committed rector, husband, father, grandfather, coach, counselor, mentor, and friend. He will be deeply missed by all those who were fortunate enough to know him, learn from him, and hear his message of God's abiding love. Through his devotion and kindness to his congregation, his family, and all those he served, he set a standard to which we should all aspire.

Father Brown will be laid to rest tomorrow, with a mass of Christian burial at the Cathedral of the Incarnation. But Father Brown's spirit and kindness will live on through his beloved wife Marylou, his children Jeanne, Thomas, Timothy and Janice, his daughters in law Lisa, and Mary Patricia, and especially through his grandchildren Aidan Byron, Sarah Margaret, Frances Anne, and Matthew George.●

#### 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 in March of last year. 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 terrible crime that occurred July 8, 1997 in Rock Island, IL. A gay man was attacked by two youths who used anti-gay epithets. The assailants, Nicholas S. McGonigle, 18, and Donald Thompson, 17, were charged with aggravated battery and a hate crime in connection with the incident.

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 and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.●