

are going to show you the sites that have been abandoned, the rollbacks of this administration because there are so many I cannot fit them on one chart.

I will show two charts that detail the various rollbacks and broken promises of this administration. You can see it is just impossible to take the time because there are 100 rollbacks in clean air, clean water, and safety and health for our people. It causes a lot of concern.

Senator JIM JEFFORDS, who is the chair of the Environment Committee on which I serve, is highly upset about the Superfund situation and highly upset at the fact that there are rollbacks now being proposed on the Clean Air Act.

Madam President, you have two beautiful young children. You know when they breathe dirty air, the impact on their lungs is far greater than when you and I breathe that same air. The bottom line is by rolling back the Clean Air Act, as they plan to do, our children are going to suffer.

We have a situation where the President has now proposed a rollback of the Clean Air Act. Senator JEFFORDS is trying to learn on what they based this decision. He has asked the EPA for information similar to the information I asked them for on the Superfund sites. I want to be able to tell you which of your constituencies are not going to have their Superfund sites cleaned up. I want to be able to tell the same to my Republican colleagues and Democratic colleagues. I cannot get the information. Things have gotten so bad that we have had to ask, at the time, the inspector general to help us get this information on Superfund, and Senator JEFFORDS is going to have to call together our committee and issue a subpoena to get information in terms of the rollback of the Clean Air Act.

Let me sum up this way: I am concerned the priorities of this administration are leaving our people vulnerable, vulnerable to high crime rates, vulnerable to dirty air and dirty water. I think the chickens are coming home to roost. Maybe it is all theoretical, except when you find out it is not somebody else's Superfund site that is not being cleaned up but it is yours.

Let me show you the sites across the country. Every single State except North Dakota has a Superfund site, and the purple reflects the Superfund sites. These are the most toxic, most dangerous sites.

I am here today as the chair of our environmental team. I am proud Senator DASCHLE has appointed me. I have a very good team of Democratic Senators with whom I am working, and I will come to the floor again to bring you up to date on this issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

VACCINES

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, I rise for a few minutes to discuss in morning

business an issue that involves essentially every American today, and that is an issue regarding the shortage of vaccines. Every day, thousands and thousands of parents take their children to physicians' offices all across this great country, not because their children are sick or in response to an acute illness, but because they understand the importance of preventing a potential illness.

They want, and they rightfully expect, their children will be able to receive vaccines needed to prevent illnesses that range from tuberculosis to measles to mumps to rubella to chicken pox. Yet—and I tell this to my colleagues and to people listening across the country—the fact is that many of these parents are being turned away with their children still vulnerable to some of these very destructive and often deadly diseases. Five vaccines that prevent eight childhood diseases have been in short supply in the United States since last summer.

Thankfully, there have been no major outbreaks among American children. We thankfully have been vigilant about vaccinations in this country in recent years, and our population on the whole has built up a strong immunity. But we have a short supply of vaccines today. The longer these vaccine shortages continue, the more vulnerable our children become.

If we do not take prudent steps today in Congress to address these current and recurring vaccine shortages, it is almost certain—from a public health standpoint, from what we know today—that American children will experience an outbreak of diseases that we have the tools, we have the ability, we have the medicines to prevent.

Is it possible to have these destructive diseases appear in this day and time? The answer is yes, and these vaccines that are in short supply today in our country are necessary to prevent such outbreaks that have occurred in other industrialized nations.

If we look at Japan, for example, vaccination rates for whooping cough dropped from the 80-percent rate in 1974, to 10 percent in 1976—from 80 percent to 10 percent over a 2-year period. This caused a dramatic rise in the incidence of the disease from 400 cases and no deaths, to 13,000 cases and 41 deaths within 5 years.

The vaccine for pertussis, which is whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus is one of the five vaccines in short supply. The others are for tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox and pneumococcal disease, which can lead to pneumonia, bacteremia—that is bacteria floating in your blood that can give you fever and make you ill—and meningitis, which is inflammation of the structures that surround the brain.

These vaccines for our children are in short supply. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the CDC, reports that new supplies of these vaccines will be available soon. That is

good news. Two of the vaccines that are now in short supply will be available later this summer, two more by the end of the year, and the last one in the fall, we believe—maybe a little bit later.

That is welcome news. But the underlying, fundamental problems that have caused the current shortage—and past shortages—if not addressed, will cause another shortage in the future. Vaccine shortages will occur year after year, time after time, if we do not act. Now is the time to address the fundamental problems underlying these shortages.

Today, there are only four manufacturers producing vaccines for America's children. Of those four, only two are American companies. New companies that may want to produce vaccines are confronted with this dual risk of increasing liability and at the same time questionable return on investment. When you put those two together, there are fewer and fewer manufacturers, and that is contributing to this shortage.

The remaining vaccine manufacturers are upgrading and expanding production facilities. Again, that is good news. Even if we have a flood in the supply of vaccines to take care of current shortages, it will be only a matter of time when we have another drought for these lifesaving vaccines. We must address the underlying, fundamental reasons for these recurring vaccine shortages. We have to do that in a thoughtful and comprehensive way based on what we know are the realities in terms of production and usage. It is the job of the Senate to set this framework in place.

In March, I introduced the Improved Vaccine Affordability and Availability Act. This act does a number of things. In essence, it requires the Federal Government to build and maintain a 6-month supply of prioritized vaccines that we and our public health and our medical communities agree are necessary to prevent these preventable diseases.

This would stabilize the supplies over time and help us to be better prepared in those years in which vaccine production cannot meet the demand at that point in time. It would also expand the funding available for State and local efforts to boost immunization rates. You can have the vaccine and know that the vaccine prevents disease, but unless you actually apply that vaccine to our children it is not going to do much good. This increased vaccination effort will focus on adults and children who are underserved or who are at high risk of contracting vaccine-preventable diseases.

Perhaps the most important provisions in this bill are modifications to help restore balance to a program called the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program. This program was created about 20 years ago, in the mid-1980s, to rapidly compensate those who suffer serious side effects from vaccines that we recommend, from a public

health perspective, our children receive. It has been very successful. This program also reduces the burden of litigation for doctors and nurses who administer the vaccines, as well as for manufacturers.

Until a few years ago, the program seemed to work very well. But now factors threaten it from working so well and will cause an impediment to the supply of vaccines over time. Let me briefly explain.

We have had a rush of new law suits, which are threatening our vaccine supplies. The Vaccine Injury Compensation Program is literally being overwhelmed today with new cases. Many of those are broadly without merit. As a result of the program's 240-day decision deadline, State and Federal courts are increasingly becoming the forum for expensive litigation. And many of the meritorious claims and justified claims are not being decided in a timely way.

One pending lawsuit is for \$30 billion in damages—\$30 billion. If you look at the whole value today of the global vaccine market, the total value is only \$5 billion. This one lawsuit is six times the global market for vaccines.

This climate of legal uncertainty has contributed to an exodus of manufacturers from being in the business at all and also from being in the business here in the U.S. We have seen a subsequent rise in the price of vaccines. Since the 1980s, the number of vaccine manufacturers has dwindled from 12 down to 4. In some cases, only a single manufacturer is producing some of our most critical vaccines. The Improved Vaccine Affordability and Availability Act—S. 2053—restores balance to the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program. It would help compensate those with serious health side effects from vaccines while at the same time ensuring that unwarranted litigation does not further destabilize our vaccine supply.

The development and widespread use of vaccines indeed has been one of the most successful public health initiatives in our history. We have reduced the incidence of diseases, such as measles, mumps, and polio, and we have even eradicated smallpox—which over a period of time has killed somewhere between 300 million to 500 million people in the 20th century alone. Smallpox as a disease does not exist.

The decision before us is whether or not to build on the successes that we have achieved in vaccines in the 21st century. I speak not only of vaccines that already exist—the vaccines for our children that are in short supply—but also as we look at the role of future vaccines needed to address bioterrorism—when we know we don't have the vaccine for the Ebola virus today. We have inadequate vaccines for three of the seven agents that are classified by our intelligence agencies as critical and for which we are at risk. Some day we will have a vaccine, I believe, that will hopefully cure Alzheimer's disease.

What we are looking for is a platform—a comprehensive approach for all vaccine development.

The Improved Vaccine Affordability and Availability Act will help us to expand the vaccine market. It will stabilize our vaccine supply, and it will improve access to vaccines.

When parents take their children to the doctor, they will not be turned away because of a shortage of supply of these vaccines.

Earlier this month the Improved Vaccine Affordability and Availability Act gained additional momentum when the Advisory Commission for Childhood Vaccines—the group that advises the Secretary of Health and Human Services on improving the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program—voted on June 6 in favor of most of the provisions in our bill, S. 2053.

I thank the members of the Advisory Commission for Childhood Vaccines, or ACCV, for acting so quickly on a matter of such importance, and also for lending their expertise to this debate. Further, I thank them and express my appreciation for their suggestions in how we can modify some of the provisions in the bill.

I urge my colleagues to look at this particular bill and I look forward to working with my colleagues as we move forward in considering the ACCV recommendations.

The need to act is urgent. We simply cannot afford to wait until tragedy strikes, or to surrender the gains we have made over the last 50 years in reducing and preventing childhood diseases through vaccination. I urge my colleagues to join Senator HUTCHISON and Senator BUNNING in cosponsoring S. 2053, and to work with us to pass this critical legislation this year.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you, Madam President.

THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I would like to share a few remarks about the Defense bill that we will be back on in a few minutes.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, will the Senator yield for a unanimous consent request?

I ask unanimous consent that this Senator be recognized for 10 minutes following the Senator's remarks.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, we have had a good process in the Armed Services Committee, of which I am a member. Senator LEVIN is a marvelous chairman, and leads in a very skilled and wise way. Our ranking member, Senator JOHN WARNER, former Secretary of the Navy and a patriot, in many ways lends his wisdom to the debate. We have come out, except I suppose on national missile defense, with a

bill with which we feel comfortable. I think a large amount of the credit goes to President Bush for stepping forward and providing leadership in calling for a strong budget.

I thought I would just share a few remarks about my view of where we are, what we are spending, what we have been spending in the past, and where we need to go in the future.

Many people may not know that 10 years ago, under the last budget of former President Bush, the appropriated amount for defense was \$327 billion. We started, since that time, a continuous downgrade movement in spending for the defense of this country, which has really put us in a bad position.

Several years ago, one of our key witnesses said we are facing a bow wave of unmet needs. We know that since the late 1980s personnel has dropped 40 percent in our services. They are better trained and better equipped than before. They are doing a terrific job, but we are down about 40 percent from the height of our personnel at that time.

So what is it that has really happened? We have had inflation. In many ways, we have had increased demands on us around the world. We have a demand that we have all agreed to in this body of which I think everybody is on board; and that is, we need to transform our defense. We need to reach our objective force. We have set an objective as to what we want our military to look like and be. We want it lighter. We want it more mobile. We want it more lethal, more scientific, and technologically based. That has been our goal, and we have been moving in that direction, but it costs money.

But despite those demands, we have not done very well, until recent years, frankly, in our spending. In 1993, our defense budget was \$327 billion. That is what we appropriated, \$327 billion. In 1994, it dropped significantly in one year to \$304 billion. In 1995, it dropped again to \$299 billion, falling below \$300 billion. In 1996, it dropped again to \$295 billion. In 1997, it dropped again to \$289 billion. In 1998, it hit the bottom, \$287 billion.

During this time, we had inflation, we had other demands, and we had salary increases for our people in uniform, but the defense amount was going down steadily.

In 1999, we had the first increase in the defense budget from \$287 billion in 1998 to \$292 billion in 1999—not enough, really, to meet the cost of inflation, but in real dollars, actual dollars, it was the first increase in many years.

In 2000, we had another minor increase to \$296 billion. In 2001, we got over \$300 billion again, for the first time in many years, and appropriated \$309 billion.

That is not a very good record. It emphasizes how we began to lose sight and take for granted the forces that defend us around the world. It represented a dramatic reduction in real