

the needs we had. He worked very hard with me. I regret we had a take-it-or-leave-it with the House.

Also in Baltimore, we have 40 Notre Dame volunteers.

These 40 Notre Dame volunteers help 1,842 elementary school children. They work in Baltimore schools tutoring children and providing after-school activities to help kids learn and keep them out of trouble.

Notre Dame is a success story of a faith-based organization making a difference for our communities. But without additional AmeriCorps funding, Baltimore will lose 40 Notre Dame volunteers. And 1,842 children in Baltimore will not be tutored or mentored. These are some examples in Maryland. But communities all around the country will be hurt because the House leadership would not approve emergency funding for AmeriCorps.

How did we get here? The leadership of the House of Representatives has blocked adequate emergency funding for FEMA disaster relief, fighting wildfires, the NASA *Columbia* investigation, and AmeriCorps.

The Senate acted quickly on the President's supplemental request.

The Senate approved \$1.55 billion for FEMA, \$253 million to fight wildfires, \$50 million for the NASA *Columbia* investigation, and \$100 million for AmeriCorps. But the House sent us a supplemental that is totally inadequate. There is only \$984 million for FEMA.

At the last minute before recess the House supplemental did not include funding for fighting wildfires, the NASA *Columbia* investigation, or AmeriCorps. Then, the House left town for the month of August.

In April this year, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Subcommittee became very concerned about a shortfall of FEMA disaster relief funding. Senators COCHRAN and BYRD asked President Bush to request emergency funding for FEMA disaster relief. But the President didn't request funding until July 7. When he did, the Senate acted quickly.

We passed it within 4 days. The President asked for \$1.55 billion and we approved it. But the House only wants to give FEMA \$984 million, only 60 percent of what the President says is needed.

We have never let FEMA's Disaster Relief account fall to such a low level. Right now, FEMA only has \$89 million to respond to disasters. It is irresponsible to shortchange FEMA when we are at the height of hurricane season.

The House bill also eliminates funding to help Western states fight wildfires. The President requested \$253 million and the Senate approved it.

But the House provided nothing. Right now, there are 42 major fires burning in 12 Western states consuming over 400,000 acres. The Forest Service is \$420 million short of what they need to fight these fires, but the House didn't provide any funding.

The House also eliminates funds to complete the investigation into the loss of the Space Shuttle *Columbia*. The President requested \$50 million. The Senate approved it. This funding is to keep our promises to the families of the 7 astronauts killed that we will find out what went wrong and we will fly again. Without the \$50 million NASA will have to borrow from other programs in order to finish the investigation.

The House supplemental does not include funding to save 20,000 AmeriCorps volunteers. I offered the amendment to add \$100 million for AmeriCorps to this urgent supplemental. With bipartisan support of Senators BOND, STEVENS, BYRD and many others, the AmeriCorps funding was voted on by the full Senate and was sustained by an overwhelming 71 to 21 votes. But the House refused to follow the usual and customary process to resolve differences. The House didn't want to face the Senate in conference.

Because a small minority of House members want to scuttle the \$100 million for AmeriCorps even though an overwhelming majority of the Senate supports it, a majority of the House supports it, and 43 Governors support it.

I want to give my sincerest thanks to my colleagues in the Senate who supported emergency funding for AmeriCorps. I appreciate it and so do our volunteers and the communities they serve.

How did the AmeriCorps shortfall happen? There was a bureaucratic boondoggle. AmeriCorps overenrolled 20,000 volunteers.

Every year, the VA-HUD subcommittee funds 50,000 AmeriCorps volunteers but AmeriCorps enrolled 70,000.

How did we know about it? Senator BOND chaired the subcommittee leading the fight for reform in fiscal responsibility and uncovered the mismanagement at our April 10 hearing.

We started GAO and IG investigations. Senator BOND called for a new Chief Financial Officer. I called for new leadership. And we wrote a bipartisan bill to fix the accounting and mismanagement problems.

Our bill passed the Congress in 2 days and was signed into law.

So while the House puts out press releases about how they want to punish volunteers and communities they serve, the Senate puts out performance.

This is an emergency today. The law says funding for volunteers and the awards that help pay off their student debt must be in the Federal checkbook when the volunteers begin their service. Without emergency funding AmeriCorps can't sign up volunteers now to start in school-based programs in September.

Teach America, for example, will lose education awards for 2,700 volunteers who are going to start teaching in September.

We cannot wait until October for fiscal year 2004 and I won't wait until October.

I will continue to fight in September for AmeriCorps.

The President has called for a new spirit of voluntarism.

Young people have responded, but the House leadership wants to squander volunteer opportunities to punish volunteers and communities because of a bureaucratic boondoggle.

Mr. President, it is regrettable that the House leadership won't resolve differences in the usual and customary way. But I will continue to fight for our communities that need disaster assistance and depend on help from volunteers.

The needs won't go away and I will continue the fight in September.

I want to reiterate that the need continues. Because the need continues, the fight will go on. I promise every AmeriCorps volunteer, every community that is dependent on those volunteers, and every member of the American family looking to those volunteers, I am going to fight for them and I will stand up for them. I am going to turn to the Senate and say let's not take what the House says when they give it a take-it-or-leave-it stamp.

I yield the floor.

#### AMERICORPS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I am appalled at the House's refusal to provide needed emergency supplemental funding to AmeriCorps.

There was an editorial in the Wall Street Journal yesterday describing their rationale for the House position. The WSJ says, "the concept of federally subsidized volunteerism strikes us as something the country can't afford" and "if Congress lacks the nerve to kill AmeriCorps, then we're glad it at least won't throw good money after bad."

The Wall Street Journal can say that this is something the country can't afford. But I know differently. AmeriCorps is something the country can't afford to do without.

I will be the first to say that the administration's mismanagement of funds is disappointing to say the least. It is further upsetting that they are unwilling to put up the money it takes to keep those mistakes from hurting the volunteers.

I am also disappointed that the President promised to promote and grow the program, but is unwilling to put up the money to do so. It is really unfair for the President and the House to talk out of both sides of their mouths, supporting volunteerism, but then refusing to pay the comparatively small cost involved in keeping volunteerism afloat.

But this is not a problem with AmeriCorps volunteers, or with the communities they serve. Senators MIKULSKI and BOND in the "Strengthen AmeriCorps Act" are doing the things that need to be done to prevent future financial discrepancies.

These funding cuts don't punish those who are guilty for the problems.

These cuts punish volunteers, and communities, and the beneficiaries of the volunteers' work.

In Iowa, AmeriCorps volunteers have improved 30,000 acres of wildlife habitat. They work to improve water quality, they restore prairie land, they prevent soil erosion, they fix trails, they provide interpretive centers, and they work with communities to teach people to do these things year-round on their own.

AmeriCorps volunteers give presentations on disaster preparedness. In Dubuque, Iowa, 13 year old Korey Monahan took one of those classes. She went home, and helped her family develop a plan in case of a fire. Around midnight on April 1, their house did catch fire. But Korey, her mother Kristy, and her four brothers and sisters survived that fire because they had a solid plan. Korey won a national award from the American Red Cross for her outstanding preparedness.

In Davenport, IA, vandalism and crime in city parks have been reduced sharply in just two months, as AmeriCorps members have begun patrols through a Park Ambassador program. AmeriCorps members provide a welcoming presence and act as "eyes and ears" for local law enforcement. They walk through parks, and provide a welcoming presence. They connect with nearby neighborhood watch groups to recruit volunteers to join them in helping keep the parks safe and clean.

The REACH, Rural Education and Community Help, AmeriCorps program provides assistance to battered women and children in rural Iowa and minority communities where services for victims of domestic violence are minimal or non-existent. REACH members also provide programs in schools, including conflict resolution, sexual harassment, diversity and dating violence.

During the 2001-2002 program year, members made 5,994 victim contacts. Members also provided court accompaniment to battered women as they navigate the legal system. In both 2001 and 2002, members provided legal advocacy at over 600 court hearings.

The original goal was to ensure that no battered women would need to drive more than thirty miles to receive services. They are well on their way to making that dream a reality. Four stand-alone offices are now open. They have secured other sources of funding and have hired full-time staff. In addition, members have opened offices in sixteen counties and provide additional coverage to surrounding communities. Before AmeriCorps, roughly a third of Iowa's 99 counties had services, now only four in Iowa are without a victim outreach program.

Apparently, helping people like Korey Monahan to save her family from fire, repairing our environment, reducing crime, and assisting battered women is "throwing good money after bad." That's not what I call "bad money," and I am glad that Congress

saw fit to appropriate it. I will do all I can to see that we continue to spend "good money" for great purposes.

THE AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr. HOLLINGS. The Amtrak board of directors is a seven-member body charged with making important corporate decisions for the National Passenger Rail Corporation. The board members are appointed by the President, and they each bring with them a certain background or expertise that benefits the National Passenger Rail Corporation and its executives.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. The most recent Amtrak board was comprised of governors, mayors and corporate executives, each of whom brought a unique perspective. A geographically diverse board is crucial to establishing a national rail system. I was very pleased when President Bush appointed David Laney of Texas to the board last year. Earlier this month, Mr. Laney was selected by his fellow board members to serve as chairman.

Mr. CARPER. As a former member of the Amtrak board and Governor of Delaware, I personally understand the important role that board members play in leading the corporation and I want to thank my colleague for recognizing the special skills that governors bring to such a position. The board's strong leadership establishes a clear direction for the corporation and provides proper oversight and accountability. Without this clear direction, investors and customers can quickly lose confidence in the company and its ability to perform and grow. The current board of management has done an excellent job of maintaining a solid and predictable course through particularly uneasy times.

Mr. HOLLINGS. The board members have a formidable responsibility to make sound decisions and investments that will successfully serve both the corporation and the Nation's rail passengers. At this critical juncture, when Amtrak is poised for either salvation or bankruptcy, the work of the board must be allowed to continue uninterrupted.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I fully agree with your concern that the Amtrak board of directors must continue to function even while the board is in the process of being restaffed. Terms of two of the board members, specifically Governor Dukakis and Mayor Smith, expired on June 25. I understand that the terms of two other board members, Ms. Rosen and Governor Holton, will expire on September 24. If no new board members are appointed before September 24, the board will be reduced from seven members to only three members.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Yes, by September 24, the Amtrak board will lose its quorum and its ability to function unless it uses other avenues available under the law to continue its important role. That is why I am pleased to learn that the board is already exploring measures that can be taken under the corporate laws of the District of

Columbia to continue to operate as a board even while it cannot achieve a quorum of members.

Mr. LOTT. It is good to know that there are other legal avenues that can be followed so that the duties of the Amtrak board are not suspended indefinitely while candidates are nominated, vetted, and confirmed by Congress. As we all know, Presidential appointments can often be a long and arduous process. However, it is my hope that the Commerce Committee and the Senate will consider the confirmation of Amtrak board members as promptly as possible once we have received candidates from the President. Of course, I would like to acknowledge the work of Mayor Smith of Meridian, MS. He agreed to offer his knowledge and experience to the board, and has served for years as chairman of Amtrak's board of directors. I am grateful for his dedication to Amtrak and the excellent work he did for the railroad during his term. It is most important that the White House provide names of candidates for the board as quickly as possible so that we can begin moving through the confirmation process and return the Amtrak board to its full composition.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I am concerned that after September 24, there will be no one on the board from the Northeast corridor, which represents over half of Amtrak's ridership as well as the primary infrastructure owned by the corporation. The board needs to have qualified people who are knowledgeable about the complex operations of the Northeast corridor and its critical importance to the entire region.

Mr. CARPER. The Senator from Mississippi's comments about the importance of receiving candidates soon is very true and I hope that the Bush administration will promptly follow the normal procedures of appointments, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The members of the Amtrak board are tasked with leading our national passenger railroad, with stewardship over substantial Federal resources and the responsibility of ensuring that the needs of the corporation and the traveling public are met. A stable and competent board is critical for so many reasons. Now is not the time for the kind of uncertainty that would clearly come from an partially staffed or incapacitated board as my colleagues have mentioned. As vacancies occur on the Amtrak board, the Bush administration has two critically important obligations that they must meet to ensure that Amtrak has a chance to survive and prosper. First, they must allow the Senate to fulfill its constitutional role of reviewing nominees so that we have the most qualified and capable people for this important job. Second, while that process is underway, they must ensure that a strong, fully functional board remains in place to provide the direction and stability Amtrak needs.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, this emergency supplemental would provide an additional \$983.6 million for disaster

relief and emergency assistance. It is estimated that the disaster relief fund will exhaust its current funding by the end of July 2003 in part due to higher-than-expected costs for disaster relief, including funding for tornadoes and winter storms. These additional resources are needed to continue to provide necessary emergency assistance.

With respect to the firefighting funds requested by the President, I am pleased to announce that we have an agreement with the administration on funds to continue our battle against fires, particularly in the West and Alaska. The administration has informed me it remains committed to the President's request for emergency supplemental appropriations for disaster relief and recovery efforts. Their commitment to continue to pursue enactment of the full request when we return in September is paramount to the challenges we face.

I ask unanimous consent that the Transfer Strategy statement be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the REOCD, as follows:

TRANSFER STRATEGY

As of July 28, the Forest Service has obligated \$304 million for fire suppression, leaving \$48 million in remaining balances in the suppression account. Based on this information, the Forest Service will need to transfer between \$147 million and \$235 million of unobligated available funds from other accounts to pay for fire suppression.

The Administration remains committed to the President's July 7, 2003, request for emergency supplemental appropriations for disaster relief and recovery efforts and will continue to pursue enactment of the full request when Congress returns in September.

The following table illustrates how the Forest Service would likely transfer funds from other accounts to cover the anticipated cost.

Account	Transfers to reach \$195 M	Transfers to reach \$283 M
Preparedness .....	30	30
Fuels Reduction .....	10	10
Land Acquisition .....	38	65
Capital Improvement and Maintenance .....	11	21
Working Capital Fund .....		20
National Forest System .....	40	40
State and Private Forestry* .....	10	34
Research and Development .....	8	15
Total .....	\$147	\$235

\*Includes Forest Legacy Program.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, the Senate now takes up a fiscal year 2003 supplemental appropriations bill in the amount of \$983.6 million to replenish the Federal emergency disaster relief fund in the Department of Homeland Security.

These funds are urgently needed. In April of this year, Senator COCHRAN, chairman of the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, and I, as the ranking member, urged the administration to release funds that the President was holding up and also urged the administration to request necessary funds to shore up a looming shortfall. Now we are told that the disaster relief fund has a balance of \$89

million and is expected to be completely exhausted by August 8.

The President finally sent up an emergency supplemental request on July 7 for \$1.55 billion to assist recovery efforts in West Virginia and over 300 other areas in every State of the Nation that had been hard hit by severe rains, floods, and tornadoes. It took the Senate Appropriations Committee, under the leadership of Senator TED STEVENS, only 2 days to report out the necessary \$1.55 billion in supplemental funds for disaster relief. That legislation also included \$253 million for fighting 42 major wildfires which have consumed over 400,000 acres in 12 Western States, as well as \$50 million for unanticipated costs associated with the recovery and investigation of the Space Shuttle *Columbia* accident—all requested by the President.

That legislation also included \$100 million for the AmeriCorps program in order to avoid deep cuts in the number of volunteers at a time when the President has proposed to increase the number of volunteers by 50 percent.

Only 2 days later, on July 11, this legislation cleared the Senate floor by a vote of 85 to 7, and conferees on behalf of the Senate were appointed. During Senate debate, the \$100 million for AmeriCorps was voted on separately and was sustained by an overwhelming 71-to-21 vote.

Now here we are almost 3 weeks later. The House Members have gone home for an August recess. Just before they left, they sent over to the Senate a \$983.6 million stand-alone supplemental for disaster relief only without the necessary funds for fighting the wildfires in 12 Western States, nor the funds for the *Columbia* Shuttle investigation, nor the necessary funds for AmeriCorps. According to the latest Department estimates, this funding level for disaster relief isn't even enough to make it to September 30. The House sent to the Senate this stripped-down, stand-alone supplemental for disaster relief on a take-it-or-leave-it basis.

This is no way to legislate. The chairman of the Appropriations Committee knows that I am not blaming him. He has been trying energetically to engage the House to accept the necessary funds for fighting wildfires, for the NASA shuttle investigation, and for the AmeriCorps shortfall. However, the House leadership and its allies in the White House have turned a deaf ear to needs of the firefighters in the Western States, the requirements of the NASA investigation, and the 20,000 AmeriCorps volunteers who are expecting to embark on a program of working in schools teaching our children reading and math, providing care to our senior citizens, cleaning up our parks, and other valuable volunteer services to our communities.

All of these funds are urgently needed, and none are more urgently needed than the funding for disaster relief.

I am advised that, because of the lateness of the administration's re-

quest, FEMA has already stopped making payments to States for \$400 million of infrastructure repairs in the 300 communities with outstanding natural disasters. Communities have already been forced to put projects for repairing damage from past disasters on hold.

In my State of West Virginia, for example, I am told that payments for projects have not been made since February of this year almost 6 months ago. West Virginia is owed over \$10 million in disaster relief fund payments. Of this amount, \$7 million is owed for payments for repairs to dams, sewers, and public buildings, and \$3 million is owed to reimburse the State of West Virginia for hazard mitigation, including acquisition and demolition of properties in floodplains and for relocating structures.

In McDowell County, WV, for example, FEMA owes \$1.1 million to help McDowell County to acquire 64 structures that were substantially damaged or demolished in the June 2002 flood.

In the town of Welch, WV, FEMA owes \$250,000 for a sewer project already completed by the contractor. The town is unable to pay the contractor for the work, which could result in a lawsuit.

A similar situation obtains in the city of Bradshaw, where the work has been completed to prevent raw sewage from being dumped into a river. In this case, an amount of \$50,000 is owed to the contractor.

The West Virginia Conservation Agency, a State agency responsible for cleaning blockages forming in streams, dams, and reservoirs to avoid further flooding and damage, is owed \$200,000 by FEMA. The State agency has an annual budget of \$500,000 and FEMA's delay has caused the agency's balances to drop to near zero. As a consequence, should there be another flood in West Virginia, the State conservation agency would not be able to perform its work.

These problems exist all across the country. We cannot wait any longer. We must approve this urgent legislation. However, because of the intransigence of the other body, we will be acting, regrettably, without providing the necessary funds for fighting wildfires, for investigating the Space Shuttle *Columbia* accident, or for the shortfall in the AmeriCorps program.

Once again, the President has failed to follow through on his promises. This legislation is \$566 million below the administration's budget request for disaster relief. It is \$50 million less than the administration budget request for NASA. It is \$289 million less than the administration's budget request for fighting wildfires. It includes no funds for the shortfall in AmeriCorps—a program the administration claims it supports.

By its failure to engage the House leadership in support of these funds, the President's silence speaks volumes. It is the same old administration theme of rhetoric without resources.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, it is imperative that the Senate act on this measure now. The Department of Homeland Security's Emergency Preparedness and Response disaster relief fund has been depleted to a dangerously low level. This is due to nearly \$300 million in unexpected expenses related to the Shuttle *Columbia* disaster recovery effort, and another \$200 million because of the tornadoes and floods that have affected many States this year.

On July 7, 2003, the President submitted an emergency supplemental request to Congress totaling \$1.9 billion.

Emergency supplemental appropriations fully funding the President's request are included in the Senate-passed fiscal year 2004 Legislative Branch Appropriations Act. However, the House approved for the Department of Homeland Security's Emergency Preparedness and Response disaster relief fund only \$983.6 million. Not only does this bill not meet the needs of wildland fire management and NASA, but it does not include all that is needed in the Emergency Preparedness and Response disaster relief fund. The House bill is not sufficient to meet the needs for disaster relief outlined by the President in his request.

I received from my state's Emergency Management Agency a specific request that illustrates why this supplemental is needed now. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the letter from Robert Latham, Jr. be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT AGENCY,  
Jackson, MS, July 30, 2003.

Senator THAD COCHRAN,  
Chairman, U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COCHRAN: The shortage of funds in the federal disaster relief account is placing serious financial hardships on the communities in our state. The State of Mississippi has experienced 8 presidential disasters in 2½ years. As a result 79 of our 82 counties have been declared disaster areas by the President during this short period of time. Because of 2 previous open disasters, Mississippi now has 10 open disasters.

Currently the federal obligation for Public Assistance under these open disasters is over \$31.5 million. These funds are critical to the rebuilding of critical infrastructure such as public buildings, roads, bridges, and schools in our cities and counties. In addition to this, we currently have in excess of \$5 million in submitted projects designed to mitigate the effects of future disasters on our communities. We also have over \$7 million in mitigation projects awaiting submission pending the availability of funds in the federal disaster relief account.

The State of Mississippi and its communities continue to incur a tremendous amount of disaster related costs that must be reimbursed in accordance with the FEMA-State Agreement. Adequate funding of the federal disaster relief account is critical to rebuilding our communities and providing the services that our citizens expect and deserve. The federal government has a profes-

sional and moral responsibility to fulfill its financial obligation to assist the state and its communities in this recovery process.

I appreciate your assistance in this matter and urge you to encourage Congress to move quickly on this issue. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance to you or your staff.

Sincerely,

ROBERT R. LATHAM, JR.,  
*Executive Director.*

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, last Friday, on July 25, just as it was preparing to leave town and recess, the House of Representatives sent to the Senate an emergency supplemental appropriations bill that fails to meet the needs that have been outlined by the President and by the majority of Members of the House and the Senate. I rise to express my profound disappointment with the House leadership for their action. It put the Senate in the objectionable position of having to adopt or reject the House version because any effort to amend that bill would delay urgently needed disaster aid.

The House-passed bill includes only \$984 million for disaster emergency spending, even though the President requested \$1.55 billion for disaster relief and emergency assistance. These funds are needed to cover the unexpected costs of the winter storms, as well as tornadoes and hurricanes which are affecting Texas and other southern States. Just last week we saw the streets of Denver flooded so high, cars were floating in the streets.

The House bill also leaves out \$289 million to fight fires in the West even though this is proving to be one of the driest seasons on record. At this time there are 45 large fires burning in the West, a total of almost 400,000 acres of active wildfires. If they continue to rage, these fires will take more lives—five were lost in the last week alone—and ruin homes and even communities. How are these communities, which are experiencing the worst fiscal crisis in a generation, to cover these costs without any Federal assistance?

The House bill also neglects to provide \$50 million for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to cover unanticipated costs associated with the Shuttle *Columbia* accident and to allow NASA to begin to implement measures recommended by the Columbia Accident Investigation Board. The President requested these funds and I agree that we should provide them. When the *Columbia* space shuttle accident occurred, it devastated our Nation, reminding us that we cannot become complacent about space travel. Let us at least learn from this accident and ensure that it never happens again by implementing the recommendations of the accident board.

Of most concern to me and to the New Yorkers I represent, the House bill fails to include \$100 million for AmeriCorps—emergency spending that the Senate passed overwhelmingly by a vote of 71 to 21 July 11. This funding is not only supported by the vast majority of Senators, it is also strongly sup-

ported by the majority of House Members. Two hundred and thirty four Representatives from both sides of the aisle signed letters to the President requesting additional funds for AmeriCorps.

In addition to Members of Congress, the Governors have weighed in to support AmeriCorps. Forty-four Governors including Governor Bush from Florida, Governor Taft from Ohio, and Governor Pataki from my home State of New York sent a letter to the President and Congress asking us to provide additional funding for AmeriCorps.

Over 145 U.S. mayors, including the mayors of Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, San Diego, and New York, have sent letters in support of additional funding for AmeriCorps. One hundred and ninety college and university presidents have signed a letter in support of additional funding for AmeriCorps.

Two hundred and fifty business and philanthropic leaders took out full-page ads in the New York Times and the Financial Times asking the President to request \$200 million in additional AmeriCorps funding.

One thousand eleven hundred and eight community-based programs that rely on AmeriCorps to meet their community's vital needs have also sent a letter to Congress about their support for this funding and I ask unanimous consent to print that letter into the Record now as well.

Seventy-one editorials have appeared in newspapers from coast to coast endorsing the additional funds for AmeriCorps and calling on Congress to act to prevent programs from being forced to close and prevent thousands of young people from being denied the opportunity to serve.

So how do we account for this outpouring of support?

Mr. President, I submit that it is for the simple reason that AmeriCorps works. For the price of a small grant towards higher education and a small living stipend, AmeriCorps volunteers transform communities. They fill vital gaps that otherwise would go unfilled and in the process, they make the future brighter for themselves and so many others in our society.

Sister Mary Johnice, who runs a shelter in Buffalo, described the impact AmeriCorps has had on her organization at a recent event, "AmeriCorps forms a team of workers, hard workers, who make a difference in other people's lives. They are selfless, outstanding and sacrificial, never counting the cost of what they do and whom they serve." She went on to describe how Buffalo has come to count on AmeriCorps members during difficult times. "Everyone knows when snow hits the City of Buffalo, although it's a beautiful sight, the city can be paralyzed," said Sister Johnice. "I worked with AmeriCorps to pack thousands of food bags, and deliver heavy packages of food to the homebound. I saw

AmeriCorps workers walk miles for a prescription a new mother needed after having a baby. I looked at workers shoveling snow for hours so emergency vehicles could move. And I witnessed faith and love in action . . . lives touching lives! Isn't that what life is all about?" she asked.

Quincy Calimese, a young man from the Bronx said that AmeriCorps has changed his life. "I was waking up at two o'clock every day," he said. "I had nothing to do but run the streets and be the baddest person on the block, meanwhile getting others to do the same. Now I'm asleep by ten o'clock and up every morning at seven o'clock. I'm not running the streets and I try to motivate others to do the right thing, especially the younger kids. Mostly now I'm focused on my future as an architect and staying out of trouble. I spend a lot of time in the house, and now I'm reading, something I used to think was boring. I like how simple my life has become. No more worries, no more watching my back everywhere I go."

If the \$100 million are not approved, programs like the ones Sister Johnice runs and the one Quincy Calimese participates in will be devastated.

National programs with proven records of success like CityYear, Teach for America, and Jumpstart will lose more than half of their sites. Jumpstart, which today serves 3,500 children, including 900 in New York, will probably have to close every one of its New York sites. This poster shows the progress of a shy little boy who, through the help of Jumpstart members, is now about to write his name. He is on the path to a successful future thanks to AmeriCorps.

President Bush himself said of this program, "I want you to know, America can be saved one person at a time. You see, this great society of ours can be changed one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. And these six heroic students, people who have said, listen, serving something greater than myself in life is an important part of being a citizen, have been a part of what's called Jumpstart." I believe that he meant those words when he spoke them. And I agree with him. So, how can we stand by and watch as Jumpstart loses 60 percent of its Corps members?

AmeriCorps is also integral to reducing the achievement gap between students living in high-poverty communities and their better off peers. Teach for America is an AmeriCorps program that recruits extremely talented and bright college graduates to teach in America's neediest schools. Last year 16,000 college seniors with average GPAs of 3.5 and average SATs of 1,300 applied to teach. Only 1,700 of them were selected. The majority of these students stay in education, devoting their careers to improving educational outcomes for low-income students. I am proud that the largest Teach for America corps in the country is in New

York City. But I am deeply concerned about the number who will choose not to join the program after they learn that their education awards will not be forthcoming.

Mr. President, this is not a partisan issue. When I organized a letter in support of providing \$3 million for Teach for America in April, 9 Republicans and 10 Democrats signed on. This program has strong bipartisan support. So, why will only 16 percent of Teach for America members receive education awards this year?

How did all of these programs, which have such overwhelming support, get to the point where they need an additional \$100 million or they will go out of business?

Well, we have to look at the history. Yes, there was mismanagement by Corporation officials. The inspector general's report revealed that for a long time the Corporation was enrolling more volunteers than it had the resources in the trust to support.

But Congress has not helped the situation. In 2000 and 2001, believing that the Corporation was being overly prudent in the way it was managing the trust, Congress rescinded a total of \$111.2 million. And in 2002, Congress appropriated nothing for the trust, leaving it to rely on the interest it was accruing from previously appropriated funds. At the time, it seemed like the right thing to do. And an independent analysis from KPMG LLP confirmed that the National Service Trust was solvent. How could Congress have foreseen the tragic events of September 11 and the President's Call to Service for every American?

Nevertheless, they occurred. And the response to the President's call was overwhelming. Twenty-five percent more volunteers enrolled in AmeriCorps in the year after he made his announcement.

Should we not have rescinded the funds from the trust? Probably. Should we have appropriated more for the trust in 2002? Yes. Should the President have acted sooner to ensure that the Corporation was allocating the correct number of volunteers, based on the resources it had at its disposal? Yes, I believe so. Should Corporation officials have been less accommodating to Americans who rose to meet the President's call to service? I suppose so.

But here we are today. And we have to act in the best interest of our Nation.

I believe we should reward the thousands of young people who signed up to serve their communities. They are not at fault for the misjudgment of the Corporation officials. Yet they are the ones who will be punished if we take the House's lead here today.

President Bush proposed to increase AmeriCorps by 50 percent. Instead it is about to be cut by 60 percent. This is not what the President claims to want. It is not what the majority of the Senate wants. It is not what the majority of the House wants. It is not what most

Governors want. It is not what most mayors want. It is not what most community leaders want. And it is not what most business leaders want.

I know we can do better for AmeriCorps, which has been such a lifesaver for so many communities across New York and America.

Today is a tragic day for AmeriCorps. It is a day when we are giving pink slips to 20,000 dedicated Americans who want to serve their communities. We are telling them that their service is no longer needed. I hope that we can find a way to do better by AmeriCorps when we return in September.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I am proud to live in a country where so many citizens volunteer their time to serve their Nation. The United States has always had a strong tradition of volunteerism.

And my pride is bolstered by a surge in participation at volunteer organizations—including AmeriCorps—since the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Our Nation depends on such volunteer organizations to provide crucial community services. For example, AmeriCorps enlists the help of our Nation's youth to tutor and mentor children, build affordable housing, teach computer skills, clean parks and streams, run afterschool programs and help respond to disasters in communities that wouldn't otherwise have such services.

At a time when our Nation's youth are turning out in record numbers to volunteer and our communities are facing budget crises, you would think that Congress would make funding for our national service programs a high priority. But it has done the opposite.

Before they left town last week, the Republican-controlled House rebuffed attempts to provide \$10 million for the program. As a result, AmeriCorps will drop 20,000 of its 50,000 volunteer slots this year.

This dramatic downsizing during these tough economic times will deprive communities of needed help, and young volunteers of a small stipend they need to pay for college or student loans.

We know the program has a history of mismanagement—and those problems are being fixed. In fact, the President this month announced an overhaul of the agency's management.

But the mistakes of a few at the top shouldn't jeopardize the opportunities for young volunteers or the communities that rely on the services they provide.

There is no questioning the essential role AmeriCorps plays in helping communities and promoting volunteerism in America. In order for volunteers to make the greatest possible impact on society, we must continue our support for this and other national service programs.

I hope when we return in September, we can provide AmeriCorps the support it needs to put our Nation's eager recruits to work in communities that depend on their help.