

whose incomes go up to 200 percent of poverty, they are eligible for a benefit each year that is worth about \$2,500. We also have in our State a wonderful program called the Nemours Program, funded by a trust left by a wealthy family a long time ago. They provide help to children in my State and they also provide assistance to senior citizens in my State. The DuPont Children's Hospital in Delaware is funded by that trust. It is a wonderful institution. It helps kids all over the country and literally all over the world. The Nemours Plan also provides a prescription drug plan for senior citizens whose income runs from 0 to 135 percent of poverty. They also provide eyeglasses and dentures.

We have to be smart enough in our little State of Delaware to make sure the dollars being spent for prescription medicines under the Nemours Plan continue to be spent on prescription assistance for Delaware seniors. It does not need to be spent in the same way it is today, because the Medicare plan will cover literally all of the needs for very low income seniors that Nemours currently assists with. But those same dollars can now be used to help fill in the gaps and make more generous the basic Medicare plan, which will be, at best, modest.

Similarly, the millions of dollars the State of Delaware is spending on the prescription assistance plan that we put in place roughly 4 years ago covers between 135 percent and 200 percent of poverty. If we are smart in our State, we will take those same dollars and redirect them—not necessarily to cover the same people; we will not need to. Some of those people who will be advantaged by virtue of the Medicare plan won't need the kind of help they get under the Delaware Prescription Assistance Plan. But we should take those dollars now being spent through that program and redirect them to fill the gaps, to wrap around and supplement the basic Medicare plan.

Similarly, the dollars spent by private sector employers and by public sector employers should no longer, starting in 2006, be spent exactly in the same way, but to the extent that we are smart and wise and farsighted, we can redistribute those dollars to build around the basic Medicare plan, to fill the gaps that obviously are there that need to be filled, and be able to provide in the end a benefit that we can all feel good about and be proud of.

I close by going back to where I started. If we had gathered here this year and had no Medicare Program, and we said let us start from scratch, we would include a prescription drug plan. In 1965, we didn't have the ability to provide prescription medicines for the sort of things we do today. If we had, a lot of people would have lived a lot longer and healthier and better lives.

A couple of days from now, I will be with my own mother. I look forward to being with her, probably the day after

Thanksgiving. She is alive today in part because of the love that surrounds her. She is also alive today, I am convinced, because of prescription medicines to which she has access. She has heart failure and takes medicine for that. She has arthritis. She is able to take medicine for the arthritis that afflicts her. My mom suffers from Alzheimer's disease. She and literally hundreds of thousands of Alzheimer's victims around the country today have access to medicines that are beginning to show great promise in making sure that many of us do not end up living the last years of our lives in a state of dementia. She has a better quality of life today because of prescription medicine. She gets a fair amount of help through the employer that my dad used to work for. They provide a prescription benefit and hopefully will continue to do that. We are thankful for the assistance that she gets. For a lot of people in our country who do not have anything at all, who do not have any kind of prescription benefit, who are elderly and need that help, a lot of them will get this help as a result of the legislation we have adopted here today.

Is this legislation all we would like it to be? No. Is this the end of the road? No. Is this a decent beginning? It is. It is incumbent upon Congress to make it a beginning, a good beginning, but not the end.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

IN MEMORY OF JUDGE RAYMOND J. PETTINE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, on Monday, November 17, 2003, Rhode Island, the judicial community and the entire Nation lost a great jurist, a great scholar and a great man. United States District Court Judge Raymond J. Pettine passed away leaving behind a legacy of protecting individual liberties and constitutional rights.

Judge Pettine was born July 6, 1912 on America Street in Federal Hill, one of the original Italian neighborhoods in Providence; a fitting place to be born for someone who would champion the Constitution that distinguishes this country, America, from so many others. His father was a wigmaker in Italy who immigrated to these shores to find a better life for his family and to make a better America through his labors and his sacrifice. Judge Pettine was sustained and inspired by the example of these good people, his mother and father. The hard work, the great patriotism, the unwavering decency and integrity, the deep respect for both family and faith, the gracious manners of a true gentleman were learned in that home on America Street.

Early in his life, Judge Pettine became fascinated with the law. As a child of eight, he scrawled a note to the Dean of Harvard Law School and asked him, "What do you have to do to be-

come a lawyer?" The Dean wrote in reply "study hard, be a good boy, always have a dream." His dream led him to Providence College and Boston University Law school. Soon after graduation, he enlisted in the United States Army and served on active duty from 1941 until 1946 rising to the rank of major. He later would be promoted to colonel in the Judge Advocate General Corps as a reservist.

After his discharge from active duty and a brief stint in private practice, Judge Pettine began a thirteen year career as a prosecutor in Rhode Island Attorney General's office. Like every task he undertook, he brought great passion and determination to his endeavor. He understood that our adversarial system of justice requires that both the prosecution and the defense must bring the full weight of the facts and the law before the jury so that they may have the benefit of principled and forceful advocacy to make their decision. He was a tough and uncompromising prosecutor determined to enforce the law. His reputation and his record as a prosecutor earned him appointment as the Federal Attorney for the District of Rhode Island in 1961. His service as Federal Attorney won him the praise of U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy as one of the nation's top three federal prosecutors. And, this prosecutorial experience would help make him a superb judge upon his appointment to the bench in 1966 by President Johnson. Judge Pettine recognized that the role of a judge was different than that of a prosecutor or defense counsel. He was charged with something greater than simply enforcing the law or arguing for a client. He was charged with seeking justice, that delicate balance that rests on fairness and a keen understanding of the nature of people as well as the tenets of the law. He was also charged in a special way with defending the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He recognized that our democracy, in his words, "prizes itself in having a Bill of Rights designed to protect us against despotic abuse of authority by the government."

There was no more courageous, forceful or principled defender of the Constitution than Raymond Pettinne. In 30 years on the federal bench, and as chief judge from 1971 to 1982, Judge Pettine staunchly guarded the individual rights enshrined in the Constitution. He said the Constitution should be interpreted in ways that "give meaning to the heart and soul of what it's all about: a kinder, more understanding Constitution that recognizes the disenfranchised, the poor and underprivileged."

In his rulings, he repeatedly upheld the Bill of Rights' freedom of speech, of religion and of privacy. Judge Pettine stood by the Constitution and showed courage in the face of controversy when he, a practicing Catholic, ruled that municipalities could not erect Christmas nativity scenes on public

land. As he said, "I firmly believe this with great conviction: that there has to be a separation between church and state—that one of the saving graces of this country is the fact that we are tolerant of all religions, and even of those who have no religion. And, if we start breaking that down, we are going to be in an awful lot of trouble."

His wise defense of the Constitution and its protections for individual conscience brought him vicious criticism and personal scorn. But, no amount of criticism or scorn could deter him from his obligation to extend the protections of the Constitution to the poor as well as the powerful, to the maligned as well as the popular. Judge Pettine embraced his judicial duties with remarkable dedication. He became a scholar of the law and, in order to insulate himself from even the appearance of partiality, he led a life focused on his family and the lonely rigors of his judicial responsibilities. Nevertheless, he was a dashing figure in Rhode Island. He was a man of great culture and erudition who exuded style and panache.

Judge Raymond J. Pettine has left a remarkable legacy. His wisdom, his integrity and his selfless devotion to the Constitution made him a judge of extraordinary achievement. His love of family and his compassionate regard for all he met made him a man of singular worth. I admire him greatly. He has given us the example and the confidence to carry on. And, his presence will continue to be felt whenever we stand up in defense of the Constitution and in defense of those who are "disenfranchised, the poor and underprivileged."

My deepest condolences go out to his family and friends, especially his daughter, Lee Gillespie, his granddaughter, Lauren Gillespie and his son-in-law, Thomas Gillespie.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I note on the floor the distinguished senior Senator from the State of Montana. I am sure he has a desire to speak and fill other appointments. I ask the Senator, without losing my right to the floor, how much time does the Senator desire?

Mr. BAUCUS. My guess is I will consume a maximum of 10 minutes.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I have the floor; do I not?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I yield the floor to the distinguished Senator from Montana not to exceed 10 minutes, with the understanding that upon the completion of his remarks I retain my right to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. I ask that the Senator from Montana be limited to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Montana.

THANKING STAFF FOR HARD WORK ON MEDICARE

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I thank my good friend, Senator BYRD, from West Virginia.

There have been many comments about the Medicare bill that just passed, all the time and effort, and the controversies that surround it. My personal view is that it is not just a good bill, it is a very good bill. It will help senior citizens and a lot of others who need help.

I understand some of the criticisms made against the bill. Some of them are overdrawn and exaggerated. But I understand the core points some critics have made. As with all legislation, and as with all things human, there is some truth all the way around. I pledge my time and effort to work to correct any imperfections in this legislation that may arise. But all in all, we have to make decisions. We have made a decision; and that is, to pass this legislation. I think it is a good bill that is going to help a lot of people. It is a major advance to the Medicare Program.

The Medicare Program, which was enacted 38 years ago and signed by President Lyndon Johnson in Independence, MO, has been a tremendous success for our senior citizens.

This bill represents the next major advancement. It is a new entitlement for prescription drug benefits for our seniors not contained in the original Medicare Act that passed 38 years ago.

There are a lot of people to thank. And my point here today is not to dwell on the bill but, rather, to thank people who worked so hard and who ordinarily receive so little credit.

The most noble human endeavor is service. It is service to church, to community, to family, to spouse, to children. It is service in whatever way makes the most sense for each one of us. There are many people who served to the maximum in helping to write good legislation, and I shall mention their names.

Members of the House and the Senate who serve get the benefit of their names in newspapers and shown on TV—usually it is a benefit, sometimes it is not—but at least they get the credit or the blame. But there are other people who work very hard behind the scenes. That is, the staff, who probably work even harder and receive little or no recognition. So I would like to recognize a few of those people who played a central role in this legislation.

First, my Finance Committee health care team, led by the wonderful Liz Fowler. Those of you who have worked with Liz Fowler know what I mean. There is none better. She works so hard, she is so smart, and she has a wonderful disposition, working hard to help provide better health care for Americans.

Jon Blum. He was the ace numbers guy. I think in many cases he knew more about the various intricacies of this bill than anyone else; an amazing man.

Pat Bousliman, the same. Pat worked extremely hard and knew the ins and outs of all the provider positions—the physician and the hospital payment provisions, and home health care, so well.

Andy Cohen, who worked primarily on Medicaid and low-income issues, and then Dan Stein, who was the clean-up hitter—he is wonderful. And I'd like to recognize former staff persons, who also worked so hard on this bill earlier in the process, but have since taken advantage of different jobs or opportunities.

Kate Kirchgraber. Kate was our Medicaid specialist.

Mike Mongan is a young man, who is brilliant. I was able to hold onto him for one extra year before he finally decided to go off to law school.

Those are the members of my Finance Committee health care team who worked so hard.

Others in the Finance Committee who played a very key role are Jeff Forbes, the minority staff director, and Bill Dauster. Many people know both Jeff and Bill. Bill has served the Senate in many capacities, particularly with his expertise in budget matters and Senate procedures. He was invaluable to me.

Russ Sullivan is my top tax person. And Judy Miller. Judy is from my home State of Montana and, she knows pension issues better than anyone I can think of. The two of them worked on the tax provisions in this bill.

Laura Hayes handled press for the Finance Committee.

Tim Punke is my chief trade person. And Brian Pomper, also on the trade staff. There are several trade provisions that came up in this bill, particularly with respect to reimportation from Canada.

Two of my former staff who left a year ago, or less than that, are wonderful people and also deserve recognition. One is my former staff director, John Angell; and my chief counsel, Mike Evans, who, during the course of this bill, would call in. They would call in and give lots of advice.

Senator GRASSLEY, Chairman of the Committee—his health team have all been wonderful to work with. Linda Fishman, Mark Hayes, Colin Roskey, Jennifer Bell, and Leah Kegler—all working so hard. And others on Senator GRASSLEY's team, Ted Totman, who has been with Senator GRASSLEY for many years, and Kolan Davis, who is Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY's staff director.

Senator BREAUX, my chief negotiating partner: On his staff is Sarah Walter. Sarah is very smart. She is very good. Michelle Easton and Paige Jennings, both of whom have also contributed significantly to this bill.

Other conference members, of course, were Chairman BILL THOMAS and