

Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel and their thousands of workers desperately needed a loan guarantee to stay alive, what did this administration do? It sought to rescind all of the funds available to the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Program. These rescission requests were pending at exactly the same time that both Weirton and Wheeling Pittsburgh Steel had loan guarantee applications pending before the loan board. When Wheeling-Pittsburgh's first application was denied, it had to refile. The administration continued to request rescission of all funds in the loan program.

But those of us who know West Virginia, who love West Virginia, and love its people, stood up for steel and stood against the Bush administration. We put our shoulders to the grindstone and pushed with all our might to find a way to keep West Virginia's steel industry in business. Unlike the Bush administration, we kept faith with the people of West Virginia. As ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, I was able to persuade the committee to retain funding for, and reject the administration's attempts to kill, the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Program in both 2003 and 2004. But that didn't stop the Bush administration. When it became clear that they couldn't kill the program in their budget, they tried to kill it administratively, by shifting funds out of the steel loan guarantee program and into another Commerce Department account. Instead of helping steelworkers keep their jobs, the Bush administration wanted to shift money in the loan guarantee program to some other account at the Commerce Department, an agency that, in this administration, has spent millions of dollars helping multinational corporations transfer American jobs overseas.

But, some of us, unlike the Bush administration, believe in keeping American jobs here at home. So we kept pushing to save our steel jobs. To stop them from being sent overseas. And, we did it. We did it in spite of the Bush administration. If you don't believe me, listen to what Jim Bradley, the CEO of Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Company said on March 26, 2003, the day on which Wheeling Pittsburgh's application for a steel loan guarantee was approved. He stated:

Without the leadership of Sen. Robert Byrd, Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel's 3,800 employees would be facing a bleak future. By creating and fighting for the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Program, Sen. Byrd has given this company and its workers the opportunity to build a future for themselves and for the communities in which they live and work.

Now, I am not reading this to toot my own horn. I am reading it to remind West Virginia steelworkers and their families that this administration is not here to help you. I am reading it to remind everyone listening that this administration worked to kill the very steel program that saved the steel jobs of thousands of steelworkers from

Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. And that is not ROBERT BYRD saying it; that is the president of the steel company where 4,000 jobs were saved saying it.

So, let me say this, loud and clear: steelworkers in West Virginia and across the Nation, believe me when I tell you that this administration is not in your camp. Don't be hoodwinked by their phony concern for your welfare. It is not sincere. They don't care about you. Words are cheap. Actions matter.

As the Book of James states, "What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but no deeds?" This administration loves to talk about what it has done for West Virginia steel, but it did nothing. Where are the deeds? The Bush administration hasn't been there for Weirton and Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel's thousands of steelworkers and retirees when they needed its help.

And we know that, based on its deplorable track record, the Bush administration won't be there for them in the future.

LEAVING WEST VIRGINIA CHILDREN BEHIND

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I attended a two-room school house as a young boy. When I moved on to high school, I was one of 28 students in my graduating class at Mark Twain High School. At Mark Twain, there was no question of accountability. The teachers were in charge. The students were there to study. My parents drilled one idea in my head, and it remains a guide for me today: learn. Learn, and always strive to make yourself smarter tomorrow than you are today.

Sadly, too often today, that same emphasis is not placed on teaching and learning. I know it. Parents know it. Members of Congress know it. That is why we voted to create the No Child Left Behind Act. Congress and President Bush worked together to ensure greater accountability in America's schools. We established standards. We set the bar. But to help schools reach those standards and surpass them, Congress and the President promised increased resources to help schools succeed. To date, it has been an empty promise.

Since President Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act into law with such great fanfare in 2002, not one Bush administration budget has provided the funds that America's schools expected. In fact, nationwide, the Bush White House has shortchanged schools by \$33 billion. How often do we hear that fact from the White House? Not once. The administration trumpets its No Child Left Behind Act, but fails miserably when funding it. Accountability cannot just be a standard for teachers; it must also be a standard for this administration.

Compounding the problem and the frustration for parents and teachers, each time I and other Senators offer

amendments to make good on the promise of No Child Left Behind, the Bush White House and the Republican congressional leadership line up and defeat those amendments. Making false promises to teachers and students and parents is no way to improve teaching and learning. It is another in this administration's broken record of broken promises.

Look at one program as an example. The Federal title I initiative provides dollars geared specifically for children from poor school districts. The No Child law established specific funding levels for title I for every year through 2012, including \$20.5 billion this year. But the Bush administration tells schools to make do with a whole lot less, undercutting that pledge in its budget by more than \$7 billion.

In my state of West Virginia, about half of the public schools receive title I funding. While the President's No Child Left Behind Act promised Mountain State schools \$154 million for title I for 2005, the Bush administration's budget undercut that funding by 36 percent. Translated into students, the President's budget would deny full services to 18,398 West Virginia children. Evidently, "Leave Only 18,398 Children Behind" was not a catchy enough title for the new law.

When President Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act on January 8, 2002, he made a statement that I wholeheartedly endorse. The President said:

There's no greater challenge than to make sure that every single child, regardless of where they live, how they're raised, the income level of their family, every child receive a first-class education in America.

That is what the President said.

But what the President said and what the President coughs up in funding have proved to be vastly different stories. The No Child Left Behind Act promised to give schools the money they need to help every young person in this country succeed in the classroom. That promise has been broken. When it comes to America's schools and keeping the promise of No Child Left Behind, the Bush White House gets an F.

The title I program is not the only education program facing funding shortfalls. The Bush administration freezes Pell Grant awards for the third straight year, cutting back on college financial assistance. The White House also has proposed to eliminate funding for 38 school programs including dropout prevention, school counseling, alcohol abuse reduction, and arts in education.

If there is one Federal investment that can offer real dividends down the road, it is education. But the White House continues to play political games with classroom funding. It is time to end the posturing and give students and teachers the resources that they need to succeed.

In the coming weeks, the Senate will once more vote on the legislation that funds No Child Left Behind and Pell

Grants and education initiatives throughout the country. I urge Senators to finally make good on the promise made to parents and students and teachers. And I urge the administration to stop playing games with America's kids. Our schools and our children cannot afford 4 more years of broken promises.

DOD AUTHORIZATION CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Department of Defense Authorization conference report.

This bill funds important priorities for our troops. It gives them a 3.5-percent pay raise. It makes last year's increases in special pay for combat duty and family separation permanent.

The bill expands health care coverage for our National Guard and Reserve members and improves retirement and survivor benefits for those who have served.

The bill also funds the safety needs of our troops for the coming year. It includes over \$750 million for force protection gear, including over \$430 million for body armor. More than \$570 million is provided for additional armored humvees, and another \$100 million will be used on more armor for existing vehicles.

This bill gives our troops the tools they need to do their jobs, and the benefits they and their families deserve.

This bill also contains important reforms to the Energy Employees Compensation Program.

The Bunning-Bingaman worker compensation Amendment was added in the bill when it was on the Senate floor. The amendment included reform for the compensation program and was cosponsored by a bipartisan group including myself and 18 other Senators.

I thank the Senate managers, Senators WARNER and LEVIN, for their consideration and support of this important provision in the conference report.

This provision will fix the problems with Subtitle D of the Department of Energy's Energy Employees compensation program for sick injured cold war workers at Energy sites throughout the country.

Since the end of World War II, workers at Department of Energy sites across the country helped our Nation face threats from our enemies by creating and maintaining our Nation's nuclear weapons.

Many of these workers sacrificed their health and safety and were exposed to harms unknown at the time in their work to preserve our freedoms.

Congress passed a compensation program for the energy workers in 2000 in an effort to help these workers.

The Department of Energy's Subtitle D program failed miserably. During the past 4 years the Department received \$95 million but processed and paid only a small number of the more than 25,000 claims for workers who were made ill by their work.

DOE's miserable job with this program was especially troubling because of the Kentucky workers at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion plant, where the uranium shipped to sites throughout the country was refined.

Under DOE's operation, more than 3,000 former Paducah workers have filed for compensation for their illnesses. But zero Paducah workers have received compensation for their illnesses.

The provision in this bill transfers Subtitle D claims processing operations from the Department of Energy to the Department of Labor, which is currently handling thousands of similar claims under Subtitle B of the program.

The Department of Labor runs one of the largest and most efficient claims operations in the country.

Payments will be made directly by the Department of Labor to the worker or survivor. This solves the current issue of no willing payer for all eligible claims. Workers will get prompt medical care for their covered illnesses with no need to go through another system at the State.

This reform effort finally fulfills the promise that Congress made to DOE workers in 2000.

Many of these workers are ill and dying. Because of this reform, they will not have to wait for the Department of Energy to get its act together to process and pay the valid claims in a timely manner. DOL will take over these operations and process the claims much more efficiently and get deserving claimants the compensation Congress promised.

I urge you to support this conference report to help protect those workers who risked their health and safety to help us win the cold war.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise to express my concern about section 3116 of the fiscal year 2005 Department of Defense Authorization Conference Report, S. 4200, which the Senate passed by unanimous consent this week. Section 3116 establishes new procedures for the disposal of high-level radioactive waste in South Carolina and Idaho that resulted from the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel at Department of Energy, DOE, facilities.

As my colleagues will recall, 48 members of this body voted to remove these provisions during Senate floor consideration of the fiscal year 2005 Department of Defense Authorization bill. Senators were concerned that the provisions in the Senate-passed bill would allow the Department of Energy to leave millions of gallons of high-level nuclear waste next to drinking water supplies in South Carolina. While these provisions have been modified in conference and some changes have been made in an effort to strengthen the language, I regret to say that loopholes still remain that cast serious doubt about whether the environment near these facilities will be protected.

I want to be certain that this language does not preempt the ability of

States in which these facilities are located to issue permits to protect the surface and drinking water near these DOE facilities. The new conference report language in section 3116 appears to protect the right of states to approve closure plans or issue permits for the closure of nuclear waste containing tanks. The opening lines of section 3116 specifically eliminates the ability of the Federal Government to regulate these tanks under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 or "other laws that define classes of radioactive waste." This language is silent on state's authority, delegated to them by the federal government under the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts, to issue permits protecting surface water and drinking water. The conferees did not exempt the requirements of the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts. These laws and the regulations that implement them, which do contain lists of radioactive pollutants, are not overridden. It is my hope that these laws will be implemented the way the conferees intended, and States will continue to be allowed to protect their citizens from exposure to radioactivity through the water they drink and our lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands.

I am also concerned that nuclear waste greater than class C, and generally not suitable for near surface disposal, will remain onsite with limited oversight. Section 3116 allows these wastes to stay onsite pursuant to a plan developed by the DOE in consultation with the NRC. I would have preferred that NRC be explicitly required to follow current regulation regarding disposal of greater than class C waste. Section 3116 instead requires a new "plan" that has no particular requirements. Mr. President, radioactive waste remains environmentally harmful for an extremely long period of time. It had been my hope that we could have been more clear about the guidelines for its disposal.

As a member of the Committee on Environment and Public Works, one of the Senate Committees with jurisdiction over the management of nuclear materials, I am deeply concerned with this provisions. It is unfortunate that it will soon be law. I am concerned that, in the future, with one small change in this legislation, several other States may find their water resources at risk.

Indeed, if this waste sludge remains, the Savannah River site would continue to be among the most radioactively contaminated sites on the planet. It is my hope that the agencies responsible for implementing this section will do so responsibly, and I will be monitoring their actions.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to share my support and