

in this Nation's history, the role of the Federal Government in the conduct of Federal elections. It was an important first step. I look forward to working with my colleagues and the civil rights, disability, language minority, and voting rights communities, as well as State and local election officials, to continue our work to ensure that all Americans have access to the most fundamental right in a representative democracy: the right to cast a vote and have that vote counted.

RETIREMENT OF SENATOR ERNEST F. HOLLINGS

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues in tribute to Senator ERNEST "FRITZ" HOLLINGS. I will miss my good friend from South Carolina, who in 2003, at the age of 81, finally became his State's senior senator—after 36 years as a junior Senator.

In addition to being remembered as a coauthor of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings legislation that cut tens of billions of dollars from the Federal budget deficit, FRITZ HOLLINGS has left an indelible mark on our nation in the areas of health care, environmental protection, resource conservation, technology development, job creation, transportation security, and law enforcement, to name a few.

Immediately after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on America, Senator HOLLINGS worked to protect the safety of our traveling public by authoring the Aviation Security Act which created the Transportation Security Administration. Similarly, recognizing that America's ports and borders were our Nation's weak security links, Senator HOLLINGS championed legislation to increase security at America's ports.

As the father of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Senator HOLLINGS recognized the extent to which the ocean environment sustains us—from human uses in commerce and recreation to being the original cradle of life on our planet. He knew the importance of taking appropriate steps to be responsible stewards of this rich, yet fragile resource.

His oceans legacy includes authorship of the National Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, which established Federal policy for protecting coastal areas, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which also became the model for other countries, for the protection of dolphins, sea otters and other mammals. In a continuing effort to do what is best for our ocean environment, Senator HOLLINGS created the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy in 2000, to review the accomplishments of the last 30 years, and recommend actions for the future. Upon the issuance of the report, Senator HOLLINGS laid the groundwork for legislation to adopt the recommendations of the Ocean Commission. I am the proud cosponsor of two of those measures, S. 2647, the

Fritz Hollings National Ocean Policy and Leadership Act, and S. 2648, the Ocean Research Coordination and Advancement Act.

Beyond the oceans, Senator HOLLINGS worked to make our communities and schools safer, through programs such as Community Oriented Policing Services, COPS, that put more than 100,000 police officers on the streets in 13,000 communities across the country. The COPS program is also the largest source of dedicated funding for interoperable communications for public safety officers.

Senator HOLLINGS brought competition to the telecommunications arena which resulted in new services to consumers at affordable rates.

I will miss Senator HOLLINGS' wisdom, vision, and wit, but mostly his friendship.

I wish FRITZ and his wife Peatsy a fond aloha.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the FY 2005 omnibus appropriations bill, which the Senate passed late last month and the President signed into law earlier today.

When this legislation was considered by the Senate, I cast my vote in opposition. At that time, I stated several reasons for my vote. I rise today to state several additional reasons for my vote—reasons which have come to light only upon a more thorough examination of this legislation.

First, the omnibus appropriations bill underfunds educational activities in the No Child Left Behind Act by approximately \$8 billion relative to authorized funding levels. It underfunds activities under Title I—which assist low-income school districts—by over \$7.7 billion. The bill also underfunds activities authorized in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act by over \$10 billion. By denying localities adequate Federal support with which to raise school standards, student achievement, and infrastructure standards, we are denying millions of children and their families across the country the educational resources they need to succeed in a competitive world. We are denying them teachers. We are denying them tutors. We are denying them important components of the academic curricula—components that include art, foreign language, physical education, and music. Without these resources, our children are going to continue to struggle to keep up with children of other nations in educational achievement and proficiency.

Moreover, this legislation freezes the maximum Pell grant for low-income students who plan to attend college to \$4,050 for the third year in a row. It also does not include a necessary recalculation of eligibility requirements—an oversight that will cause up to 90,000 low-income students across this country to lose this vital resource for paying tuition costs. That oversight will also reduce the amount of a Pell Grant by an average of \$300 for about one million students. The Pell Grant is the

cornerstone of the Federal financial aid system that provides affordable college access for thousands of American students who otherwise could not advance their education. In an era of growing inflation and skyrocketing tuition costs, we should be encouraging and not denying our students' chances of achieving the American dream through education and hard work.

Second, the bill does a poor job of making the needs of disadvantaged children and families a priority. Head Start, for example, has received \$6.9 billion—a slight increase over the previous year, but only enough to reach and meet the needs of 60 percent of eligible young children. Inadequate investment levels have also been provided for important initiatives, such as the Child Care Development Block Grant and Community Health Centers, both of which provide vital services that ensure the health and well-being of disadvantaged families and their children. We all know that high-quality child care and health services for the poor continue to be in scarce supply or simply unavailable, unaffordable, and of dubious quality. Instead of trying to rectify these growing challenges, we are only exacerbating the problems faced by millions of Americans in urban, suburban, and rural areas.

Third, the omnibus bill severely cuts important housing and community development services—particularly those services that assist low-income and elderly individuals. While the Department of Housing and Urban Development has received a meager 2 percent increase, the Section 8 voucher initiative has received inadequate investment, the Fund for Elderly Housing has been cut by \$30 million over last year's funding level, Housing for People with AIDS has been cut by \$11 million over last year's funding level, and the Community Development Block Grant—an important initiative that has assisted dozens of distressed municipalities in my State—has been slashed by \$212 million over the fiscal year 2004 level. In addition, the HOPE VI initiative, which has assisted in the redevelopment of public housing complexes across the country, has been cut by 75 percent over the past 4 years. Many municipalities in my State, including Danbury, Hartford, Middletown, New Haven, and Stamford have benefitted from HOPE VI resources totaling over \$142 million to demolish deficient facilities and build quality affordable housing. Without this vital support, many of my constituents would have been denied the opportunity to live in decent and safe housing. I find it shameful that this bill fails to provide the resources that help Americans fulfill one of their most basic needs: a decent shelter over their heads.

Fourth, the omnibus bill, in my view, discourages positive job growth and business expansion. This administration and Congress have talked endlessly about helping people find work

and encouraging small businesses to grow. Unfortunately, the actions of this bill sadly contradicts their words. Aside from the fact that this bill allows up to 425,000 Federal jobs to be outsourced and up to 8 million private workers to be denied overtime compensation—two issues about which I spoke in my previous statement—it also cuts funds to the Small Business Administration by almost 19 percent and reduces initiatives that encourage small business growth in rural America by 77 percent. Instead of working towards creating new jobs and helping working families and individuals, the legislation creates yet another obstacle for millions of Americans to provide for themselves and their families.

Beyond these four points, the omnibus bill provides inadequate investment levels for a variety of other services and initiatives that are vital to our country. The bill cuts the Environmental Protection Agency budget by 3 percent over the fiscal year 2004 level and cuts conservation programs run by the Department of Agriculture by 4 percent; it provides inadequate resources to the National Institutes of Health and beneficial research projects undertaken by that agency; it provides inadequate resources to the COPS initiatives, reduces support available to law enforcement agencies, and virtually eliminates a successful grant initiative to assist those agencies in hiring more personnel; it cuts the National Science Foundation's budget by \$105 million over fiscal year 2004 levels and cuts \$38 million from important arts initiatives run by the Smithsonian, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities; and it freezes funding for Amtrak for the third year in a row—essentially negating any chance for our country to invest in new modes of regional rail transportation. Furthermore, every initiative in the bill suffers a further 0.8 percent reduction in support so that the strict budgetary restrictions imposed by the Bush administration would be met.

It is worth to note this bill is not completely without merit. There are increased investment in child nutrition assistance, food stamps, local transportation initiatives, and global HIV/AIDS prevention. There is also much-needed support for several important initiatives in my home State of Connecticut. Unfortunately, these positive provisions do not outshine the legislation's numerous shortcomings.

The President and several of our Republican colleagues have said repeatedly that the inadequate investment levels in this bill are designed to reduce the soaring deficits plaguing our country today. They go on to say that domestic initiatives are primarily responsible for the increasing deficits. Unfortunately, the facts before us today belie these assertions. According to a Congressional Budget Office report from September 7, 2004, it is not domestic investments but the grossly imbal-

anced tax cuts imposed by this administration that have chiefly caused our current deficit predicament—a predicament that promises to have long-term ramifications for the economic health of our country. According to CBO projections, the Bush tax cuts account for the majority of an expected \$5.5 trillion deficit increase over the next 7 years. They are projected to increase the deficit more than all domestic investment combined.

In short, this legislation, in my view, reflects a continuing failure to invest in the productive potential of our children, workers, and small businesses. I sincerely hope that the Senate will do better in the 109th Congress.

PROTECTING AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, last Friday, December 3, 2004, Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson, in his resignation speech, stated, "For the life of me, I cannot understand why the terrorists have not attacked our food supply because it is so easy to do so." These are strong words coming from the man charged with protecting the Nation's food supply. Yet this sort of warning is not news to those of us who follow this issue.

The security of our Nation's food supply is of great concern to me. Over the past year, the United States has been reminded repeatedly of the vulnerable nature of the American agriculture system and the ease with which terrorists could manipulate that vulnerability. In 2003, mad cow disease surfaced for the first time in Washington State and various strains of the avian influenza began cropping up across Asia and in the United States. I have come to the floor repeatedly over the past few years to call attention to this growing problem. I also introduced legislation to strengthen prevention and response efforts as early as 2002.

At a November 2003 Governmental Affairs Committee hearing, "Agroterrorism: The Threat to America's Breadbasket," Dr. Peter Chalk, a RAND policy analyst, testified that an attack on American livestock could be extremely attractive to a terrorist for the following four reasons: one, a low level of technology is needed to do considerable damage; two, at least 15 pathogens have the capability of severely harming the agriculture industry; three, a terrorist would not need to be at great personal risk in order to carry out a successful attack; and four, a disease could spread quickly throughout a city, State, or even the country.

Dr. Tom McGinn, formerly of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, demonstrated a computer-simulated attack of foot-and-mouth, or FMD, disease at our hearing where FMD was introduced in five States. According to Dr. McGinn's simulation, after five days 23 States would be infected; after 30 days 40 States would be

infected. In this scenario, it would be likely that the disease would not be detected until the fifth day and a national order to stop the interstate movement of livestock would take place a few days later. Using Dr. McGinn's assumptions, over 23 million animals would die from illness or need to be destroyed. It is horrifying that such a massive blow could strike one of the United States' largest markets by simply coordinating the infection of five animals.

As a senior member of the Governmental Affairs Committee, one of my greatest concerns is the lack of governmental organization—Federal, State, and local—to address this problem. Over 30 Federal agencies have jurisdiction over some part of the response process in the event of a breach of agricultural security.

In a report on the country's preparedness for responding to animal-borne diseases issued in August 2003, Trust for America's Health, a non-profit, nonpartisan organization founded to raise the profile of public health issues, stated:

The U.S. is left with a myriad of bureaucratic jurisdictions that respond to various aspects of the diseases, with little coordination and no clear plan for communicating with the public about the health threats posed by animal-borne diseases.

Protecting America's agriculture and its citizens requires Federal agencies to have clear areas of responsibility that leave no ground uncovered and open lines of communication, both between agencies and with the public.

State and local officials, and the communities they serve, are the front lines of defense for American agriculture. Without adequate resources, both in terms of funding and advice, these defenses will fail. Yet agriculture and food security have not been given the national attention necessary to prevent this failure.

On December 7, 2001, I stood on the floor of the Senate and warned of the vulnerability of American agriculture. To address my concerns, I introduced S. 2767, the Agriculture Security Preparedness Act, on July 22, 2002. My bill was not acted upon in the 107th Congress, so I continued my efforts in the 108th Congress with the introduction of S. 427, the Agriculture Security Assistance Act, and S. 430, the Agriculture Security Preparedness Act.

The Agriculture Security Assistance Act would assist States and communities in responding to threats to the agriculture industry by authorizing funds for: animal health professionals to participate in community emergency planning activities to assist farmers in strengthening their defenses against a terrorist threat; a biosecurity grant program for farmers and ranchers to provide needed funding to better secure their properties; and the use of sophisticated remote sensing and computer modeling approaches to agricultural diseases.

The Agriculture Security Preparedness Act would enable better inter-agency coordination within the Federal