

any improper actions by management are dealt with swiftly and accordingly. The confidence in the GSEs has a direct impact on the stability of the American economy. The American people and the markets must have confidence in the operations of the congressionally chartered Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

We need to build upon legislation that several of my colleagues and I introduced last year. The Senate Banking Committee passed a watered down version of our legislation, but it is clear from OFHEO's findings that it is not adequate. To prevent these serious actions from occurring, the new GSE regulator must have at a minimum the same powers and resources as those of other financial regulators such as the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

House Banking Subcommittee Chairman RICHARD BAKER has scheduled a hearing next week to examine the problems at Fannie Mae. There are still too many unanswered questions and I look forward to seeing the results of the House hearing. Given the frequency of the accounting problems, pattern of manipulation and questionable management actions at both Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, Congress can no longer look the other way.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF AMERICA REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased to note that this evening the House of Representatives has considered and passed legislation that Senator HATCH and I introduced together to reauthorize and expand the Department of Justice grant program for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. I thank Senator HATCH for his longtime commitment to our bipartisan legislation and thank the 46 Senators from both sides of the aisle who are cosponsors of our legislation to support the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

I pay special thanks to House Judiciary Committee Chairman SENSENBRENNER and Ranking Member CONYERS for their leadership and commitment to shepherding this bill through the House and sending it to the President's desk for enactment into law.

Too often the public sees Republicans and Democrats disagreeing. But when it comes to the Boys & Girls Clubs of America there is no doubt that we see eye to eye: This bill shows the unified support of Republicans and Democrats for the good works of Boys & Girls Clubs across the Nation.

Children are the future of our country, and we have a responsibility to make sure they are safe and secure. I know firsthand how well Boys & Girls Clubs work and what topnotch organizations they are. When I was a prosecutor in Vermont, I was convinced of the great need for Boys & Girls Clubs because we rarely encountered children

from these kinds of programs. In fact, after I became a U.S. Senator, a police chief was such a big fan that he asked me to help fund a Boys & Girls Club in his district rather than helping him get a couple more police officers.

In Vermont, Boys & Girls Clubs have succeeded in preventing crime and supporting our children. The first club was established in Burlington 62 years ago. Now we have 20 club sites operating throughout the State in Addison, Chittenden, Orange, Rutland, Washington, Windham and Windsor Counties. There are also four new Boys & Girls Clubs in the works in Winooski, Brattleboro, Barre and Vergennes. These clubs will serve well over 10,000 kids statewide.

As a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have pushed for more Federal funding for Boys & Girls Clubs. Since 1998, Congress has increased Federal support for Boys & Girls Clubs from \$20 million to \$80 million in this year. Due in large part to this increase in funding, there now exist 3,300 Boys & Girls Clubs in all 50 States serving more than 3.6 million young people. Because of these successes, I was both surprised and disappointed to see that the President requested a reduction of \$20 million for fiscal year 2005. That request will leave thousands of children and their clubs behind and we cannot allow such a thing to happen.

In the 107th Congress, Senator HATCH and I worked together to pass the 21st Century Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act, which included a provision to reauthorize Justice Department grants to establish new Boys & Girls Clubs nationwide. By authorizing \$80 million in DOJ grants for each of the fiscal years through 2005, we sought to establish 1,200 additional Boys & Girls Clubs nationwide. This was to bring the number of Boys & Girls Clubs to 4,000, serving no less than 5 million young people.

The bill the House will pass today builds upon this: We authorize Justice Department grants at \$80 million for fiscal year 2006, \$85 million for fiscal year 2007, \$90 million for fiscal year 2008, \$95 million for fiscal year 2009 and \$100 million for fiscal year 2010 to Boys & Girls Clubs to help establish 1,500 additional Boys & Girls Clubs across the Nation with the goal of having 5,000 Boys & Girls Clubs in operation by December 31, 2010.

If we had a Boys & Girls Club in every community, prosecutors in our country would have a lot less work to do because of the values that are being instilled in children from the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Each time I visit a club in Vermont, I am approached by parents, educators, teachers, grandparents and law enforcement officers who tell me "Keep doing this! These clubs give our children the chance to grow up free of drugs, gangs and crime."

You cannot argue that these are just Democratic or Republican ideas, or

conservative or liberal ideas—they are simply good sense ideas. We need safe havens where our youth—the future of our country—can learn and grow up free from the influences of drugs, gangs and crime. That is why Boys & Girls Clubs are so important to our children.

I look forward to the President signing into law as soon as possible our bipartisan bill to expand Federal support for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Our country's strength and ultimate success lies with our children. Our greatest responsibility is to help them inhabit this century the best way possible and we can help do that by supporting the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

AGRICULTURE DISASTER FUNDING

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the agricultural disaster assistance package that was included in the Senate Homeland Security Appropriations bill. Many farmers and ranchers in my home State of South Dakota are suffering from their third, fourth and even fifth year of drought. As House and Senate differences are reconciled, I urge the conferees to retain the important disaster provisions that were approved on such a wide bipartisan basis in the Senate.

The drought provisions I supported, along with Senator DASCHLE, will help farmers and ranchers survive a severe drought. While I would have hoped producers wouldn't be faced with a choice for assistance for either 2003 or 2004, I understand that money is short in these times of soaring budget deficits. The Senate disaster assistance plan will provide almost \$2.9 billion to farmers and ranchers across the country who are suffering from agricultural disaster. The \$475 million for the Livestock Assistance Program, in addition to the \$2.464 billion for the Crop Disaster Program, are critical to my State.

This drought package was introduced by my colleagues, Senator BAUCUS and Senator BURNS, and with the help of Senator DASCHLE it was added as an amendment to the fiscal year 2005 Homeland Security funding bill by a voice vote. A voice vote reflects the overwhelming bipartisan support this drought aid package has. It is frustrating that there are members of the House majority party who would reduce or even eliminate disaster aid funding for ailing farmers and ranchers, or choose to gut other crucial agricultural programs to pay for this necessary assistance.

In 2002, Senator DASCHLE and I proposed a \$6 billion drought package, which was opposed by the President and some Members of the House. That package was pared down to \$3 billion before its passage. The current package is very similar to the package that was approved for the 2001–2002 drought. Thanks to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, including Senator DASCHLE's efforts to secure an opportunity to address this issue, we have a

drought package that will allow many family farmers and ranchers to stay in business through this extensive drought.

Over 23 groups expressed their support for the disaster assistance provisions in the Homeland Security funding bill for fiscal year 2005 at the beginning of this week, including the National Farmers Union, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Soybean Association, and National Association of Wheat Growers, to name a few. Such wide and strong support not only speaks to the number of producers who require assistance, but also to the merit of the provisions accepted in the Senate bill.

Drought is a real disaster and we must treat it as such. I am hopeful that my colleagues in the House realize how important this issue is for our agricultural producers, who are the economic engines of our rural communities and the backbone of our Nation. The Senate passed agricultural disaster assistance in a broad bipartisan manner, and I am hopeful that the House will show their support for America's producers by ensuring agricultural assistance remains at the levels authorized in the Senate bill.

SPINA BIFIDA AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina. Mr. President, I rise in recognition of October as Spina Bifida Awareness Month.

Spina bifida is the Nation's most common, permanently disabling birth defect. It is a neural tube defect that occurs when the central nervous system does not properly close during the early stages of pregnancy. Each year more than 4,000 pregnancies are affected and of these 1,500 babies are born with spina bifida. The most severe form of spina bifida occurs in 96 percent of children born with this disease. However, thanks to the good work that the Spina Bifida Association of America is carrying out to promote prevention and to enhance the lives of all affected by this condition, substantial progress is being made.

During Spina Bifida Awareness Month, a special effort is made to increase public awareness about spina bifida and its prevention. Simply by taking a daily dose of the B vitamin, folic acid, women of childbearing age have the power to reduce the incidence of spina bifida by up to 75 percent. Recent studies by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, show that 40 percent of women of childbearing age now report taking a vitamin containing folic acid every day. In addition, since the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, decision to fortify enriched grains with folic acid, CDC has documented a 26 percent decline in these birth defects. These simple changes that produce profound effects clearly demonstrate the importance of awareness.

In addition to educating the public about spina bifida, the Spina Bifida As-

sociation of America also addresses the needs of the spina bifida community. Founded in 1973, the association is the only national organization solely dedicated to advocating on behalf of the spina bifida community. Today, there are approximately 60 chapters serving over 125 communities nationwide.

I am honored to support the Spina Bifida Association and wish to commend them for all of their hard work to prevent and reduce suffering from this birth defect. I greatly appreciate their efforts to improve the lives of those 70,000 individuals living with spina bifida throughout our country. I wish the Spina Bifida Association of America the best of luck in its endeavors and urge all of my colleagues to support the association's efforts.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

KARA SHERIDAN

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Miss Kara Sheridan, the granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carl White of Ludlowe, KY. Miss Sheridan is a most extraordinary young lady. As I speak, Miss Sheridan is representing the United States of America at the 2004 Paralympic Games. The Paralympic Games are the biggest competition in the world for athletes with a disability.

Miss Sheridan earned the honor of competing in the paralympics through hard work, perseverance and a spirit of hope. I believe that it is these three virtues which have also earned her a right to a place of honor here on the Senate floor and in the hearts of her countrymen. She has risen above the challenges posed by osteogenesis imperfecta, a rare genetic condition that she was born with, and showed the world that perseverance and hope will always be rewarded.

Kara's achievements have come in many different forms throughout the years. They include graduating from Wright State University magna cum laude last year, participating in competitive swimming events, serving on committees through the National Youth with Disabilities Council, and being awarded a scholarship to work on her master's degree from the University of Miami. But the greatest honor that Kara has earned is the accomplishment of a hope so great that it seems nothing can deter her.

Miss Sheridan has shown to America and to the world what it looks like to habitually do the right thing by hoping. Thanks to Miss Sheridan, we have already been reminded of that.●

IN REMEMBRANCE OF COLEEN JARVIS

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it is my honor to speak in memory of the late Coleen Jarvis, Vice Mayor of the City of Chico and strong advocate for women, children, and the less fortu-

nate. She will always be remembered for her love of family, politics and the people whom she served so ably.

Coleen Jarvis dedicated her time and energy to improving her community. She fought to improve conditions for women, children, and the homeless. Coleen served as coordinate for the local rape crisis center and worked at Legal Services of Northern California, giving legal aid to those in need. "The community of Chico lost a resourceful, energetic, dedicated and smart leader in the too-soon death of Council Member Coleen Jarvis," said Butte County Supervisor Jane Doaln. "I first met Coleen when she worked on behalf of victims of rape and we continued our friendship and shared work on behalf of our loved community in many venues. Coleen had a deep commitment and worked very hard to improve our community and to remind us of our rightful duty to recognize and resolve the needs of the poor. We all were better representatives due to her efforts. She is sorely missed."

Coleen became an important community leader through her hard work. She was elected to the Chico City Council in 1966, and served almost 8 years. As a council member, she continued to fight for her progressive values. She was passionate about the issues and people she held dear. She was known by her colleagues and friends as a giving person who possessed great integrity, drive, intellect, and wit with an energy and spirit that drove her to fight for what she believed in. Chico Mayor Maureen Kirk reflected, "Coleen was a public servant full of integrity, passion, commitment, empathy, inclusion, tolerance, and intelligence. Her legacy is the Torres Community Homeless Shelter, the first step in her quest to find a solution for homelessness. Coleen will be sorely missed. In her 46 years, she accomplished more than 99 percent of us would accomplish in twice as many years.

Coleen Jarvis committed her life to her family and the world around her. She touched the lives of many, and her impact on her community will be long remembered.●

POLISH DAILY NEWS CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

• Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, it is with great pride that I congratulate the Polish Daily News, Inc., which celebrates its 100th anniversary of publishing the Polish Weekly. On Saturday, October 2, 2004 the Polish community will celebrate this milestone at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy. The Polish Weekly is a wonderful resource for the Polish-American community, providing a wealth of information on local issues as well as news from Poland.

Poles are the second largest immigrant ethnic group in Michigan. They have thrived in communities throughout our State and continue to maintain a strong connection to their rich heritage. Polish immigrants established