

‘\$1,000’ and inserting ‘\$2,750’”. Any reading of the language in context would indicate this clerical error, as the numerical references in the language are illogical otherwise. We will make the technical correction at the appropriate time.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the reauthorization of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

The scourge of trafficking in women and children was a priority for me as First Lady and continues to be a priority for me as a Senator. Since the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, I have been working to raise awareness of the heinous practice of buying and selling women and children like commodities. I have seen the devastation that it causes, and the lives it ruins. I have met with the families from Eastern and Central Europe, who, with tears in their eyes, pleaded with me to help them find lost ones who had been stolen from them, and I have met with the victims, including a 12-year-old girl in Thailand who was dying of AIDS after being sold twice by her family. This barbaric practice has caused far too many to exist in a perpetual state of fear and vulnerability, and we must do everything in our power to bring the scourge of trafficking out of the shadows and to the attention of the world.

I am proud to say that the United States has, for the past decade, been the leader in trying to persuade the rest of the world to eradicate this abhorrent practice. As the Clinton administration increased the antitrafficking activities of our Government through programs at the State Department and the Department of Justice, Congress was developing legislation to eradicate trafficking. We worked with the late Senator Wellstone, his Republican cosponsor, Senator BROWNBACK, and Congressman CHRIS SMITH and former Congressman Sam Gejdenson in the House, to introduce the first comprehensive antitrafficking bill in Congress. This culminated in the passage of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000. I believed then, and I believe now, that this is one of the Clinton administration’s greatest achievements and one of the most important parts of Senator Wellstone’s legacy. That law has meant the difference between freedom and enslavement for unknown numbers of potential trafficking victims, and this reauthorization provides us with the opportunity to strengthen its ability to help those who have been trafficked, and I would like to thank Senator BROWNBACK and Representative SMITH, my colleagues on the Helsinki Commission, for their continued commitment to this act since its initial passage.

I am proud to see that this reauthorization enhances the 3 P’s strategy—

prevention of trafficking, prosecution of those that engage in these acts, and protection of the vulnerable individuals who have been trafficked—that we developed in the Clinton administration. It gives the Justice Department the authority to pursue extraterritorial prosecutions of Federal employees or those accompanying them if they engage in trafficking activities. It encourages the prevention of trafficking by requiring organizations or contractors engaged in U.S.-supported peacekeeping efforts to have antitrafficking policies in place. And it will protect those who have been trafficked overseas by increasing funding for programs like residential treatment facilities.

But there is still so much work to be done. Although reliable statistics are difficult to find, we know that 800,000 individuals—the vast majority of whom are women and children—are trafficked from one country to another every year, with 15,000 being trafficked to the United States. The FBI estimates that trafficking generates \$9.5 billion annually for organized crime syndicates around the world.

I am deeply concerned about the growing domestic commercial sex trade, and I believe that we need to increase funding and target efforts to end all forms of exploitation. Any expansion of our focus must not dilute our commitment to eradicating human trafficking in all its forms in the United States, nor detract from the progress we have made in increasing prosecutions and working with law enforcement agencies. We must ensure that our government has all the resources it needs to make inroads against these awful acts on our own soil.

In the fight against trafficking in persons, patience simply is not an option. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to end this barbaric practice in both the United States and around the world, because this is not about politics, but about what we all share: universal freedom and universal human rights.

KATRINA RECOVERY EFFORTS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, this holiday season is a time for families to come together, reflect on the year’s challenges and opportunities, and give thanks for all that has been accomplished. It is also a time to take action to help those less fortunate.

The year 2005 was a year of great challenges, and among the greatest were the hurricanes that ripped through the gulf coast.

The magnitude of Hurricane Katrina was unprecedented. Its aftermath brought us images that we thought we would never see in America—lives lost, communities destroyed, families uprooted.

The toll was particularly devastating for hundreds of thousands of young children and students torn from the

surroundings and institutions they depend on, and I’d like to spend a few moments discussing this aspect of the recovery effort.

We are all familiar with the devastation that past hurricanes have caused. Some have temporarily closed schools and colleges. In the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew in 1992, the Army, Navy, and National Guard joined in helping to repair classrooms and reopen school doors in about 3 weeks. Last year, Florida schools damaged by Hurricane Charley reopened within a month, and students were quickly back on track in their classrooms.

But Hurricane Katrina caused vastly greater devastation, especially in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. More than 700 schools and 30 colleges and universities were damaged or destroyed. Almost all have been closed, at least temporarily, and many will not open until January at the earliest. Some are in danger of never reopening.

The number of students affected is staggering. More than 370,000 elementary, middle, and high school students were displaced. Over 100,000 college students were affected by the disaster. And 18,500 Head Start or Early Head Start children were uprooted from programs.

These are not just statistics. These are real people whose lives have been changed forever.

Hurricane Katrina reminded us that we are all part of a single American family. And we have a responsibility to help members of that family when they are in need.

For too many weeks, our friends in the gulf region have waited for Congress to provide help in rebuilding their lives and their communities. Today, I am pleased that we will take an important step in actually providing the assistance so obviously needed.

The Katrina and Rita relief provisions in the conference report passed by the Senate today include several proposals developed by Senator ENZI and myself to help the children and students affected by these hurricanes.

It includes assistance to ensure that the youngest children uprooted by these tragic storms receive the services, help, and support they need. The bill dedicates funding to provide access to Head Start preschool programs and child care.

It provides much-needed relief for the public and private schools across the country that generously opened their doors to schoolchildren whose lives were turned upside-down by these disasters. These schools provided classrooms, teachers, and services for all of these students, and did so without a penny from the Federal Government.

It also includes relief for colleges in the affected areas, and ensures that college students displaced by the hurricane will receive the financial aid they need to stay in school and continue working toward their degree. Several colleges in Louisiana are in danger of

closing their doors for good, unless they receive this critical assistance soon. The funding approved by the Senate today may not be enough to guarantee their future, but at least it offers much needed support.

This relief is long overdue, and I commend the Senate for taking action.

When these devastating storms struck, the entire nation responded in a way that is as caring and as generous as the American spirit.

Thousands volunteered to help. Families opened their homes. School districts across the country accommodated displaced students in their schools. Colleges and universities graciously opened their doors.

The Nation is grateful to all who did so much to help respond in the tragic aftermath of the hurricanes. We are grateful to the school principals and superintendents and the college presidents and deans who served as first-Responders and helped so many students continue their education.

But these educators need help as they struggle to accommodate the students. Congress must do its part to help these devastated communities get back on their feet and enable students to return to their schools. We also need to help the institutions that are laboring so hard to provide a safety net for these children and their families.

That is why the proposals in this conference report are so important. This funding will rehabilitate and strengthen the educational institutions that serve and assist children and students affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and help meet the needs of early education, elementary and secondary education, and higher education.

Thousands of young children affected by the storms need to return home to safe and healthy settings. They need good early childhood programs in adequate facilities. Their families need health and counseling services to cope with the trauma brought on by the storms.

The bill facilitates enrollment in Head Start and Early Head Start by waiving income eligibility and other requirements, so that families affected by Katrina will be able to enroll their children more easily. It provides \$90 million for affected Head Start centers to provide preschool opportunities to displaced students. It also provides additional support and guidance to meet the emotional needs of children and their families.

We are reminded by this disaster that schools are the heart of local communities across America. When schools open, families return, businesses return, and lives begin to return to normal. So I am pleased that the report provides \$750 million for special school reopening grants to districts and communities significantly affected by Hurricane Katrina.

These grants will aid in the effort to retain highly qualified teachers, recover lost data, establish temporary facilities, and take other steps necessary to reopen the schools.

The bill also responds to the efforts of schools in Texas, Georgia, Florida, and other States that opened their doors to displaced students. It provides \$645 million for public and private schools that have enrolled displaced students, in order to ease the transition of students into new schools, support basic instruction, purchase textbooks and materials, and temporarily expand facilities to avoid overcrowding.

Both public and private schools can benefit from this aid, but the proposal sets ideology aside and rejects the attempts by the House and the administration to provide this aid in the form of vouchers to parents through a 1-800 number. Instead, the bill uses the mechanisms of current law to provide aid for students in private schools through the public school system.

The funds can only be used for the same list of allowable educational services as for public schools and so cannot and should not be used for religious activities. It makes clear that all of the aid is temporary, and is being provided in response to the extraordinary circumstances resulting from these disasters. It is not a precedent for future policymaking.

In addition, to help meet the demand for qualified teachers, the bill authorizes the Secretary of Education to encourage states to extend temporary reciprocity for the certification of teachers and para-professionals across state lines. Teachers certified as highly qualified in one state should be recognized as meeting this standard in other States as well.

To ease the burden faced by colleges and universities in the declared disaster area, the bill also authorizes the Secretary of Education to waive various Federal reporting requirements. It includes \$200 million for student aid and waives the institutional matching requirement for students affected by the hurricane. These funds can also be used to help institutions in Louisiana rebuild their facilities and welcome their students home. Our priority should be to help these colleges and universities move into the future.

This relief package is a welcome step to help life return to normal for the hundreds of thousands of children and students uprooted by these deadly storms. We begin today to help the gulf coast communities rebuild and re-open their schools and colleges.

We need to continue this important work in the coming weeks, by assessing the ongoing needs of those affected by the hurricanes, and doing all that is necessary to help them rebuild their lives.

FAILURE OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO PASS S. 1558

Mr. LEAHY. I am disappointed that the House of Representatives has failed to act on S. 1558, which passed the Senate on November 10. This bill was introduced by Senators COLLINS and LIE-

BERMAN. I worked with them to amend it to extend for 4 years the “sunset” of a provision first enacted in the Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act of 1998 that grants the Judicial Conference of the United States the authority to redact information from a judge’s mandatory financial disclosure in circumstances in which it is determined that the release of the information could endanger the filer or the filer’s family. The bill, as amended, also extends the protections of this provision to the family members of filers.

Like the more comprehensive court security measure Senator SPECTER and I have introduced, S. 1968, the Court Security Improvement Act of 2005, CSIA, from which it is drawn, S. 1558 provides judges and their families with needed security by extending the judges’ redaction authority without interruption and expanding it to their families. It also strikes the right balance with the need for continuing congressional oversight to prevent the misuse of this redaction authority, which has been a matter of some concern to me. I appreciate that the Judicial Conference is seeking to improve its practices and the Senate passed S. 1558 because none of us wants to see judges or their families endangered. Now, because of the failure of the House to pass S. 1558 and enact the reauthorization of redaction authority for another 4-year period, these protections will lapse at the end of the year.

EPA’S PROPOSED PARTICULATE MATTER STANDARDS

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise to speak on behalf of myself and Senators CARPER, BOXER, CLINTON, LAUTENBERG, LIEBERMAN, and OBAMA.

Last night, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed new National Ambient Air Quality Standards for fine particulate matter. The National Ambient Air Quality Standards are the cornerstone of the Clean Air Act. These standards must be set at a level “requisite to public health” with “an adequate margin of safety.” They are to be based on the “latest scientific knowledge,” and EPA is prohibited from considering costs in setting them. Their fundamental purpose is to ensure that our air is safe to breathe.

We have known for years that fine particle pollution causes premature death, increased asthma attacks, and numerous other health effects. In 1997, EPA revised the particulate matter standard on the basis of that evidence. The Clean Air Act directs that EPA, together with an independent scientific review panel, examine the available scientific evidence and determine whether the existing standard needs to be changed. The proposal by EPA last night, coming almost 5 years late, represents the end result of that effort. Unfortunately, EPA selected the weakest option available to it.

In determining whether to revise the standard, EPA reviewed the more than