

should not be happening in our country.

I hope we as a Senate will give this matter the attention it deserves. Senator LUGAR and I do not claim that the bill we have introduced is perfect. We welcome advice and counsel of our colleagues on how we might craft a good shield law. It is not a partisan issue. Senator LUGAR and I have a bill that has support on both sides of the aisle. We want to work with our colleagues to see this law be enacted. It is of fundamental importance to our country that we enact a strong and good and viable shield law at the national level.

TERRORISM RISK INSURANCE

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, the second issue I will mention briefly, in addition to the shield law issue, is terrorism risk insurance legislation. I speak as the author of the original legislation 3 years ago, which provided a backstop, not a bailout, for businesses in this country that rely on having terrorism risk insurance in major real estate developments and other major projects that are potentially vulnerable to attack.

That bill expires on December 31. It is critically important for American businesses and consumers that we enact this backstop legislation. It is important for our country, important that we provide the kind of insurance coverage that would allow some protection against a major catastrophe. Without that, we run the risk of major projects not going forward.

We had a briefing from major industries and others calling upon the Congress to extend the terrorism risk insurance law for the next 2 years. We need to sit down and try to determine whether we can establish some permanent partnership between public and private sectors in which we can guarantee to some extent, should a catastrophic event occur, we would be in a position to provide a backstop, some relief, under those circumstances.

None of us want to think about those events, but certainly the events in Spain in March of 2004 and Great Britain over the last several weeks and Sharm el Sheik over the last several days clearly indicate to all of us that we are living in a different world today.

Terrorism risk insurance is not like insurance against other hazards. By the very nature of terrorism, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to develop accurate models for terrorist events. They are inherently and extremely unpredictable. Good, solid business people will say a federal backstop is absolutely critical to sustain the kind of economic growth that is important to our nation's future. Jobs are at stake, major developments are at stake, major public gatherings at sporting events and the like are at stake without the ability to provide this critical insurance, terrorism risk insurance.

We have approximately 32 cosponsors of the bill I have introduced with Sen-

ator BENNETT of Utah. Most of the members of the Banking Committee are supportive. The chairman of the Banking Committee, Senator SHELBY, indicated he would like to work out a proposal in September to go forward. My hope is that will happen. We need the backing of the White House as well as the House leadership if that law is going to be enacted.

Terrorism risk insurance legislation will require real emphasis over these coming weeks and months if we are going to succeed in enacting this bill before December 31 when the present law expires.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. DODD. Lastly, I urge that when we return in September, the top item be the Defense authorization bill. I was terribly disappointed that we put aside that bill this week. I don't recall another event quite like that where we literally pulled the Defense authorization bill for special interest legislation. With men and women in harm's way, when we are at war, it was stunning to me we would replace that effort with the proposal to provide immunity, in effect, to gun manufacturers and dealers with the legislation that was enacted earlier this afternoon.

Putting aside my view on that bill, which I have expressed earlier this week, I am stunned that the Senate would prematurely cease action on legislation to help our men and women in uniform would get everything they possibly need—not to mention provide support for veterans, for survivors' families, and for the weapons systems that are essential to our national security. I found it unbelievable we would set aside that legislation in order to provide legal immunity for gun dealers and gun manufacturers in the United States. I have never seen anything like it in my service.

I recall once, last year, there was an effort to cease work on the Defense authorization bill in order to consider the class action reform bill, which I supported and was deeply involved in crafting. We succeeded in dissuading those who wanted to make that move. We went forward and completed the work on the Defense authorization bill. We did not do that this time.

I hope when we return in September the first order of business will be to complete the Defense authorization bill. It is critically important that people who serve in the military, those who are our veterans, those whose loved ones have made the ultimate sacrifice, those who have served and given their lives for our country, that they understand how important we think that legislation is. I urge my colleagues and the leadership to place that item as the No. 1 item when we return in September.

In closing, Mr. President, the shield law, terrorism risk insurance legislation, and the Defense authorization bill are three pieces of legislation I hope

will become priority bills when we return this fall.

I yield the floor.

AFRICA WATER

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, diplomacy and foreign policy are essential pillars of our national security. They reflect the values, principles, views and interests of the American people. They are central to advancing the United States role and stature in the world.

This year, for the first time ever, we are earmarking specific funds in the Foreign Operations bill to advance a specific cause. This year, we are legislating a direct appropriation of \$200 million to advance the cause of clean water and sanitation—\$50 million specifically targeted toward Africa.

In America, we take clean water for granted. Water to drink. Water to bathe in. But in other parts of the world, clean water is a scarcity and the results are devastating.

Every 15 seconds a child dies because of a disease contracted from unclean water. Ninety percent of infant deaths are caused by unclean water. Water-related disease kills 14,000 people a day, most of them children. Millions more are debilitated and prevented from leading healthy lives.

Cholera, typhoid, dysentery, dengue fever, trachoma, intestinal helminth infection, and schistosomiasis can all be prevented simply by providing safe water and sanitation.

Unfortunately, reliable projections suggest that the problem is only growing worse. Water stress and water scarcity, leading to impure and disease borne water, is expected to increase. By 2025, upwards of two-thirds of the world's population may be subject to water stress.

Imagine living in a rural village in Sub Saharan Africa or East Asia where the village members share their water source with livestock.

Imagine being a grandmother like Mihiret G-Maryam from a small village in Ethiopia. She watched five of her grandchildren between the ages of three and eight die from water-related diseases.

Before the UK-based WaterAid organization intervened in her community, constant stomach pain and diarrhea were a fact of life. The foul smelling, contaminated water exposed Mihiret and her neighbors to parasitic diseases.

With no latrines, human waste was everywhere. As Mihiret testifies, "it was horrid to see, as well as being unhealthy."

Now, because of the education and investment of WaterAid, together with the local church, her village is clean and the people no longer suffer chronic stomach aches. Clean water has literally saved lives. And proper management and intervention can be a currency for peace and international cooperation.

I have been on numerous medical missions around the world and seen the

truth of this. In January, I traveled with my colleague Senator LANDRIEU to East Asia to survey the aftermath of the December 26 tsunami.

We helicoptered over the Sri Lankan coast and through the windows witnessed a scene of unending devastation.

Over 155,000 people died. At least 1 million lost their homes. Whole villages were literally washed out to sea.

Through all of this, the lack of clean water emerged as the most pressing public health concern. In many areas, the tsunami had poisoned wells with salt water, and swept away water treatment plants.

Shortages of potable water threatened to trigger outbreaks of diseases like cholera, typhoid, and dysentery. The large pools of stagnant water I saw along the coast were potential breeding grounds for mosquitoes carrying malaria and dengue fever.

In confronting these challenges, America showed tremendous generosity and compassion. And part of our efforts included innovative new technologies to provide clean, safe water. And those efforts continue.

This March, World Water Day launched the International Decade for Action. The United States and countries around the world are working together to reduce by one-half the number of people who lack access to safe drinking water.

I applaud the President his leadership. In August 2002, the administration launched the "Water for the Poor Initiative" to improve management of fresh water resources in over 70 developing countries. An estimated \$750 million was invested in 2004 alone.

While no single piece of legislation can eliminate water-related diseases in the world, continued leadership is essential.

In March, the minority leader and I introduced the Safe Water: Currency of Peace Act to make safe water and sanitation a major priority of our foreign relief efforts.

The \$200 million earmarked in the Foreign Operations bill is an extension of these efforts.

I commend the assistant majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, the chairman of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, for his leadership. And I thank my colleagues for their continued commitment to this pressing issue.

It is hard to imagine that something so basic, so necessary, is lacking in so many places.

Providing clean water will save millions of lives. It is as simple as a glass of H₂O.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

Mr. FRIST. Tomorrow, America celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Medicare law.

Forty years ago, standing in the Harry S. Truman library in Independence, Missouri, President Johnson told a grateful nation that "Through this

new law, every citizen will be able, in his productive years when he is earning, to insure himself against the ravages of old age."

Passage of the Medicare law ensured that never again would health care for the elderly be a matter of charity, but one of national conscience.

Medicare has served millions of seniors, improving their health and lengthening their lives. Today, 41 million elderly and disabled Americans have Medicare coverage. That number is expected to hit 77 million in 2031 when the baby boom generation is fully enrolled.

I am proud to have worked to pass the Medicare Modernization Act in 2003. This legislation guarantees seniors for the first time have access to affordable prescription drugs.

It also expands health care choices, improves preventive care, and begins to take a number of additional steps to improve quality and affordability of care in the Medicare program.

In just a few short months, in January 2006, every senior will have access to prescription drug coverage under Medicare. This represents the most significant improvement to the Medicare program since its inception 40 years ago. And 41 million American seniors and individuals with disabilities finally have the prescription drug coverage they need and the Medicare choices they deserve.

As a physician, I have written thousands of prescriptions that I knew would go unfilled because patients could not afford them. Under the Medicare Modernization Act that will soon change.

As a senator, I watched a decades-old Medicare program operate without flexibility, without comprehensive and coordinated care, without preventive care or disease management, and with no catastrophic protection against high out-of-pocket medical costs. I watched as science raced ahead, and Medicare stood still.

Now, under the Medicare Modernization Act that, too, is beginning to change. By expanding opportunities for private sector innovation, Medicare now combines the best of the public and private sectors. It provides better and more comprehensive coverage for today's seniors, and helps to lay the foundation for a stronger and more modern program for tomorrow's seniors.

The Medicare Modernization Act also offered some benefits for younger Americans. Most significantly, it is making health insurance more affordable through portable and tax-free health savings accounts. Health savings accounts are already giving younger Americans more control over their health care choices and hard-earned dollars.

The Medicare Modernization Act was a historic step forward for a program that has served millions of America's seniors. And it continues to draw on technological advances, like health in-

formation technologies and e-prescribing, to deliver more effective and more affordable care.

Medicare is a compact between generations. It is one of the most valued and compassionate legislative achievements of the 20th century. More changes will be needed in the future. But we have already begun to lay the groundwork. Medicare is providing a platform for making health care more affordable, more available, and more dependable for all Americans.

H.J. RES. 59, WOMEN SUFFRAGISTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for H.J. Res. 59, a joint resolution that expresses the sense of Congress with respect to the women suffragists who fought for and won the right of women to vote in the United States. It is my privilege to join Congresswoman SHELLEY BERKLEY, my colleague and fellow Nevadan, in the effort to honor and celebrate their hard-won achievements.

Our Nation was founded on the principle of "consent of the governed." Yet for the greater part of America's history, women were denied the fundamental right to participate in our democracy through the power of the vote. Today, it would be unthinkable and unconscionable to hold elections where not every vote properly cast is counted. Eighty-five years ago—perhaps within the lifespan of our mothers or grandmothers—this was not the case.

Next month we will observe the 85th anniversary of the 19th amendment, which finally secured women's right to vote in the United States. The 19th amendment does not just represent voting rights. It also represents a profound victory for women suffragists long seeking to be affirmed as equal partners in America's civic, cultural, and social affairs. But as victories with enduring and far-reaching consequences tend to, this one required the suffragists to first overcome numerous setbacks.

In 1866, Elizabeth Cady Stanton ran for Congress to test women's constitutional right to hold public office—and received only 24 of 12,000 votes cast. In 1872, Susan B. Anthony registered to vote in Rochester, New York, and cast a ballot—and subsequently was arrested. Two years later, the Supreme Court considered whether citizenship itself conferred voting rights and ruled that it does not for women. During the several years leading up to 1920, many suffragists, including Alice Paul, exercised their right to engage in civil discourse through protest and were thrown in jail for doing so.

These names may not sound familiar to everyone. Nor are these events the full extent of the challenges that the women suffragists faced as they fought for the ratification of the 19th amendment. The joint resolution would let us remember them and give them their due tribute.

The women suffragists commended in this resolution were instrumental not