

thereby producing quality pharmaceuticals at a more affordable cost to consumers.

In 1999, 8.2 percent of total health care spending in the United States was attributed to prescription drugs. By 2010, prescription drugs are expected to account for 14 percent of our nation's health care spending. In addition, the average cost of bringing a new drug to market has risen 50 percent in the last five years, now costing as much as \$1,700,000,000.

The trend of rising pharmaceutical costs is disturbing as it discourages innovation and impedes efforts to fight disease and address important public health concerns. High pharmaceutical manufacturing costs associated with outdated manufacturing processes significantly contribute to the rising cost of prescription drugs and overall health care in our country.

This legislation would establish a partnership between the Food and Drug Administration and other federal agencies, the pharmaceutical and medical industries, and the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Technology and Education whose member institutions include Purdue University, in my home state of Indiana, and ten other exemplary research universities throughout the country. This collaboration will expand the ability of those in the academic research field to contribute to the medical technology and pharmaceutical industries to create better quality products with more efficient, less costly manufacturing.

Without a change in the pharmaceutical manufacturing process, health care costs in this country will continue to rise and prevalent public health concerns will remain unanswered. Engaging the academic community in this process is vital and I urge my colleagues to join me as co-sponsors of this important legislation.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2794. A bill to ensure the equitable provision of pension and medical benefits to Department of Energy contractor employees; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, today Senators REID, BAUCUS, BINGAMAN, HARKIN, MIKULSKI and CANTWELL join me in introducing legislation to protect the pensions and health care of America's nuclear defense and energy workers who provide critical services to support our national defense and energy security.

Our bill reverses a policy the Bush administration recently issued to eliminate secure pensions and good health care for workers under Department of Energy contracts. This policy is bad for workers and bad for business. By attacking their secure pensions and quality health care benefits, this administration is undermining our government's ability to protect our Nation

and strengthen our economy. And it is broadcasting a message that American workers' secure retirement and good health care should be put on the chopping block. The Federal Government should be setting a good example with strong benefits for workers, instead of leading a race to the bottom.

By refusing to cover the costs for secure pensions, this administration is forcing contractors to put their employees into defined contribution plans. Workers will bear the risks of uncertain stock markets and the risk of outliving their savings. And businesses, instead of being free to choose which type of retirement plan is best for their workers, will be forced into a one-size-fits-all model.

The American Academy of Actuaries, the professionals who understand as well as anyone the benefit system in America, strongly objects to the Department's new policy, pointing out that it takes away contractors' ability to choose the type of benefit plans offered to workers and undermines retirement security. They urge that this policy be immediately rescinded.

This is a particular concern given the timing of this announcement. Right now we have a pension bill in conference designed to strengthen the defined benefit pension system.

At this critical time, the administration should be supporting the growth and expansion of the defined benefit pension system. But instead it is going the other way, by forcing businesses to abandon defined benefit pension plans. This says to me that this President is not committed to a secure retirement for Americans. First he tried to privatize Social Security; now he's trying to use our federal contracting system to do the same with our Nation's nuclear defense workers.

The administration is also attacking employer-provided health care, by saying the government will not pay more than the average in the industry for health care costs under Department of Energy contracts. In other words, it will pay only the average or below.

And the quality health care benefits Department of Energy contractors offer workers will have to be replaced by limited medical plans that unfairly penalize the least healthy workers.

These high deductible plans don't work for people who need health care the most. Persons with chronic health conditions or who are hit with illness or injury will have to pay significantly more than they would with the comprehensive insurance that the administration's proposal eliminates. These individuals will never be able to find the funds to cover the care they need before meeting the high-deductible needed for their plan to cover them. Is this how we want to treat American workers?

If the President's goal is to cut spending for health care, this is the wrong way to go about it. Workers with the kind of high-deductible health plan President Bush has mandated for

Department of Energy contractors are more likely to avoid, skip or delay the care that prevents a medical crisis. This means workers will get care when they are sicker and may need costly hospital or emergency room care. Shifting costs to workers drives up costs instead of cutting them.

Last week Senator REID, Senators BAUCUS, BINGAMAN, HARKIN, MIKULSKI, CANTWELL, MURRAY and I sent a letter to the White House calling on the President to overturn this ill-conceived policy and call off his attack on the retirement security and health care of these skilled workers. We hope that the President will reconsider. But if he does not, we will be looking for every opportunity to address this issue through this legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 474—THANKING JOYCE RECHTSCHAFFEN FOR HER SERVICE TO THE SENATE AND TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. RES. 474

Whereas Joyce Rechtschaffen, an accomplished environmental lawyer, joined the staff of Senator Joseph I. Lieberman upon his entry into the Senate in 1989 and served as his legislative assistant and counsel for environmental issues for almost 10 years;

Whereas, during her tenure in Senator Lieberman's office, Joyce Rechtschaffen contributed greatly to the protection of the Nation's environment, most significantly through important contributions to the landmark Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, ceaseless efforts to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and innovative proposals to stem the harmful effects of greenhouse gasses;

Whereas, in 1999, upon Senator Lieberman becoming the Ranking Member on the committee known at the time as the Committee on Governmental Affairs, Joyce Rechtschaffen took on the new challenge of serving as Democratic Staff Director of that committee;

Whereas during her more than 7 years in that position, Joyce Rechtschaffen worked tirelessly to advance the work of the Committee on Governmental Affairs, and its current successor, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and of the Nation;

Whereas Joyce Rechtschaffen has played a leading role in every accomplishment of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs since 1999, from the 2002 creation of the Department of Homeland Security, to the establishment of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (commonly known as the "9/11 Commission") that same year, to the 2004 reorganization of the United States intelligence community, and to the 2006 investigation into the governmental response to Hurricane Katrina, among many other accomplishments;

Whereas Joyce Rechtschaffen has shown the same focus and dedication to all of the work of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs no matter how significant the issue at hand;

Whereas Joyce Rechtschaffen has been a model manager, staffer, employee, and colleague to all who have worked with her;

Whereas Joyce Rechtschaffen has worked tirelessly and selflessly for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and its predecessor, the Committee on Governmental Affairs, these past 7 years, often at great personal sacrifice; and

Whereas Joyce Rechtschaffen has been a model of integrity, intelligence, compassion, and commitment to building a better United States and has shown herself to be the very best and brightest of both civil and Congressional service: Now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate thanks Joyce Rechtschaffen for her years of work for and dedication to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and wishes her every success in her future endeavors.

SENATE RESOLUTION 475—PROCLAIMING THE WEEK OF MAY 21 THROUGH MAY 27, 2006, AS “NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK”

Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. JEFFORDS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 475

Whereas public works infrastructure, facilities, and services are of vital importance to the health, safety, and well-being of the people of the United States;

Whereas those facilities and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of public works professionals, engineers, and administrators who represent State and local governments throughout the United States;

Whereas those individuals design, build, operate, and maintain the transportation systems, water supply infrastructure, sewage and refuse disposal systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities that are vital to the citizens and communities of the United States; and

Whereas it is in the interest of the public for citizens and civic leaders to understand the role that public infrastructure plays in—

- (1) protecting the environment;
- (2) improving public health and safety;
- (3) contributing to economic vitality; and
- (4) enhancing the quality of life of every community of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) proclaims the week of May 21 through May 27, 2006, as “National Public Works Week”;

(2) recognizes and celebrates the important contributions that public works professionals make every day to improve—

(A) the public infrastructure of the United States; and

(B) the communities that those professionals serve; and

(3) urges citizens and communities throughout the United States to join with representatives of the Federal Government and the American Public Works Association in activities and ceremonies that are designed—

(A) to pay tribute to the public works professionals of the Nation; and

(B) to recognize the substantial contributions that public works professionals make to the Nation.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 94—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH AFFECTED OR DISPLACED BY DISASTERS ARE UNIQUE AND SHOULD BE GIVEN SPECIAL CONSIDERATION IN PLANNING, RESPONDING, AND RECOVERING FROM SUCH DISASTERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. COCHRAN (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, the hurricanes of last summer brought new demands on all of our nation's rescue resources. The needs of children, particularly young children and their families, are unique and not a part of local and national recovery plans. Mental health, physical needs, day care, education, and family separation continue to be needs that for communities to address.

The National Center for Rural Early Childhood Learning Initiatives and the non-profit Save the Children, continue to lead the focused on the special needs of children. While assessing damages and recording destroyed facilities, the Rural Early Childhood center and Save the Children, with assistance from others, also developed a plan for future disasters.

Today I am introducing a Senate concurrent resolution that expresses the sense of the Senate that the Federal Emergency Management Agency should consider the unique needs of children and consider the recent experiences, suggestions and solutions of organizations and research centers. We ought to support the incorporation of child-specific needs and concerns into the National Response Plan. The Senator from Louisiana, Ms. LANDRIEU, is cosponsoring this resolution. We invite all Senators to join us.

S. CON. RES. 94

Whereas major disasters resulting in Presidential disaster declarations in the United States have increased from an average of 38 per year in the 1980s, to 46 per year in the 1990s, to 52 per year during the first half of this decade;

Whereas the occurrence of major disasters in the United States is expected to continue to increase in the foreseeable future;

Whereas the number of people in the United States affected by disasters each year is a staggering 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 as measured by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (even outside of truly catastrophic events as occurred on the Gulf Coast in 2005);

Whereas 5,192 children were reported missing or displaced to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and it took 6 ½ months to reunite the last child separated from her family;

Whereas the most serious of such cases were those 45 children arriving at shelters separated from parents or guardians with no adult supervision and it took more than 1 month to resolve all of those cases;

Whereas 1,100 schools were closed immediately following Hurricane Katrina and

372,000 schoolchildren were initially unable to attend school in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast due to the hurricane;

Whereas in Mississippi 7 percent and in Louisiana 21 percent of elementary schools and secondary schools remained closed 6 months after Hurricane Katrina;

Whereas more than 400,000 children under the age of 5 live in or have evacuated from counties or parishes that have been declared disaster areas by the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

Whereas the numbers of licensed child care facilities in areas affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita declined by 4 percent (54 facilities) in Mississippi and by 25 percent (356 facilities) in Louisiana after the storms;

Whereas children are known to benefit from rapid mental health programming following disasters to mitigate longer term impacts;

Whereas the existing system of disaster management in the United States is the purview of Federal, State, and local government emergency management organizations and the disaster management programs and activities of these organizations are not mandated nor are able to fully respond to the unique needs of children;

Whereas Federal, State, and local government emergency management professionals lack the technical knowledge, support, and contacts to address the unique needs of children that need to be incorporated into such professionals' disaster management programs and activities; and

Whereas existing legislative constraints on Federal disaster response and recovery aid programs restrict disaster officials from responding to the specific needs of children in a disaster and there is no government liaison or program concerning children's issues in disasters: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the needs of children and youth affected by major disasters are unique and should be given special consideration in planning, responding, and recovering to major disasters; and

(2) the Federal Emergency Management Agency should consult with appropriate child-focused non-governmental organizations and public university national research centers with experience in addressing the needs of children in major disasters to address the needs of children and youth in disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation, including by—

(A) incorporating suggestions from such organizations on children's issues into the National Response Plan;

(B) seeking the recommendations of such organizations on how to address the needs of children in emergency shelters, trailer parks, and transitional housing sites;

(C) jointly developing child-, family-, early childhood service-, and school-focused disaster preparedness materials to support understanding of the impact of disasters on children and strategies to mitigate them; and

(D) jointly developing risk assessment tools for communities to use in determining children's specific disaster risks.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3925. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1955, to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Security Act of 1974 and the Public Health Service Act to expand health care access and reduce costs through the creation of small business health plans