

the JASON Project to Michigan. This effort established the Lamphere School District as a JASON Project Primary Interactive Network site for Michigan. As host for JASON, Lamphere Schools helped thousands of Michigan students experience exciting scientific adventures. In 2001, Mr. McCann received the first-ever "Tech-Savvy Superintendent Award" for his leadership and vision in the area of educational technology, one of only 10 educators nationwide to earn this distinction by "eSchoolNews."

I know my Senate colleagues join me in congratulating James McCann on his retirement. I am proud to recognize his contributions to education and the indelible mark he has made in teaching with technology in Michigan. I wish him and his family many more years of good health and happiness.

#### RURAL HOSPITAL AND PROVIDER EQUITY ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today to emphasize the importance of enacting into law S. 3500, the Rural Hospital and Provider Equity Act of 2006. I would also like to thank the chairman of the Senate Rural Health Caucus, Senator THOMAS, along with Senators ROBERTS, CONRAD, and HARKIN, for taking the lead on this important piece of legislation.

There should be no difference between the quality of care that my constituents in South Dakota receive and constituents in urban States such as New York receive. Cancer, diabetes, and other diseases do not discriminate between people in rural or urban areas and there should be no discrimination between the health care services available in Lemmon, SD, and health care services available in New York City.

The Rural Hospital and Provider Equity Act extends and builds upon the important rural equity provisions included in the Medicare Modernization Act. These provisions can mean the difference between traveling 5 miles to the Wagner Community Memorial Hospital or 110 miles to Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls. These provisions—in more graphic terms—can mean the difference between a fatal heart attack and the successful stabilization of a heart attack patient.

In order to give a better picture of the benefits of this legislation, I would like to tell you a little bit about the challenges of ensuring health care access in South Dakota. My State has 66 counties and an average of 9.9 persons per square mile. The national average for individuals per square mile is 79.6.

Of these 66 counties, 44 are classified as medically underserved areas, areas that have insufficient health resources, manpower, or facilities to meet the medical needs of the population. The sheer vastness of South Dakota poses significant challenges in meeting the health care needs of our population. The Rural Hospital and Provider Equity Act includes hospital, physician, home health, ambulance, and tele-

health provisions that can make the distances of South Dakota more manageable and give my constituents access to the quality health care they deserve.

This legislation contains many provisions that will allow critical access and sole community hospitals, as well as rural doctors, to continue providing services to individuals who need it most. I would also like to highlight the telehealth provisions included in this bill that would continue serving rural beneficiaries and expand access to the type of care provided in more urban areas.

Telehealth uses telecommunications and information technologies to provide health care services at a distance. It provides individuals in remote underserved areas access to specialists and other health care providers through the use of technology. Additionally, the practice of telehealth brings medicine to people—people who live in medically underserved areas and people who are too frail or too ill to leave the comfort of their homes.

Section 19 of the Rural Hospital and Provider Equity Act requires the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to create demonstration projects that would encourage home health agencies to utilize remote monitoring technology. Utilizing technology in the home health setting would reduce the number of visits by home health aides while still providing quality care.

Each demonstration project is required to include a performance target for the home health agency. This target would be used to determine whether the projects are enhancing health outcomes for Medicare beneficiaries, as well as saving the program money. Each year, the home health agency participating in the pilot would receive an incentive payment based on a percentage of the Medicare savings realized as a result of the pilot project.

The demonstration projects would be conducted in both rural and urban settings because medically underserved areas exist across the country. Three projects, however, are required to be conducted in a State with a population of less than 1 million.

Although numerous studies have praised the ability of telehealth to deliver care to individuals in remote areas, it has been continually underutilized and hampered by legal, financial, and regulatory barriers. Section 20 of the Rural Hospital and Provider Equity Act directs the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to work with health care stakeholders to adopt provisions allowing for multistate practitioner licensure across State lines for the purposes of providing telehealth services. This provision is a step in the right direction of breaking down the barriers that prevent the adoption of telehealth.

Technology is improving each and every day and health care systems in rural America should be taking advan-

tage of technology to provide quality health care in remote underserved areas. The telehealth provisions included in the Rural Hospital and Provider Equity Act help promote the adoption of technology and have the potential to expand access to quality health care.

Individuals living in rural areas like my State of South Dakota deserve the same caliber of health care that individuals living in urban areas receive. The Medicare Modernization Act was a great start to placing rural health care providers on the same level playing field with providers located in urban areas. The Rural Hospital and Provider Equity Act continues and expands this level playing field, ensuring that rural Americans have access to high-quality health care services.

I thank Senator THOMAS for his leadership on this and other rural health issues and encourage my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

#### INTERNET SAFETY ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about S. 3499, the Internet SAFETY Act, a bill that I have cosponsored with Senator KYL and other Members of this body.

This legislation targets child pornographers, and it continues the important progress this Congress has made to crack down on those who commit crimes against children.

Earlier this year, the Senate passed S. 1086, which would require lifetime registration by sex offenders throughout the United States and would substantially increase punishments for those convicted of sex crimes against children. The House has passed its own sex offender bill, which contains many sensible provisions. And the two Chambers are negotiating to resolve their differences. Hopefully we will soon reach an agreement—and a tough, smart bill will be reported to the President.

I firmly believe there is only one way to deal with those who prey on children: they must be caught sooner, punished longer and more stringently, and they must be watched much more closely than they are today. I began advancing this law enforcement theme while I served as Texas attorney general. There, I created a specialized unit known as the Texas Internet Bureau to coordinate and direct efforts to fight Internet crimes such as fraud, child pornography, and privacy concerns. The Texas Internet Bureau successfully identified several Internet predators that were caught, prosecuted and convicted.

I will continue to work in the Senate to ensure that law enforcement agencies have every tool they need to bring these criminals to justice. The Internet SAFETY Act will play an integral part in bringing child crime predators to justice.

This bill creates a new Federal offense for financially facilitating access

to child pornography on the Internet, mandates penalties for Web site operators who insert words or images into their internet source codes with the intent to deceive persons into viewing obscene material on the internet; and requires commercial Web site operators to place warning marks prescribed by the Federal Trade Commission on Web pages that contain sexually explicit material.

It is critical that this legislation become law. The supposed anonymity of the Internet has apparently emboldened child pornographers. The availability of child pornography on the Internet is staggering, as is the presence of those who would prey on innocent children. To illustrate this point, consider that in 1998 the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline received 3,267 reports of child pornography. In 2004, the CyberTipline received 106,119 of these reports, marking more than a thirtyfold increase in child pornography reports in just a 6-year period. This is more than a disturbing trend, and it shows no sign of slowing down.

The Internet is uniquely suited to facilitate the creation and replication of pornographic images of children, as well as the speed and anonymity to distribute them. And, not surprisingly, criminal enterprises spring up for the purpose of distributing child pornography and feeding the insatiable desire of those who target children.

Let me provide an example from my home State of Texas. Several years ago, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, in cooperation with Dallas's Internet Crimes Against Children, ICAC, task force, was able to locate and dismantle a multimillion-dollar child pornography enterprise conducting business over the Internet. This effort, dubbed Operation Avalanche, resulted in over 7,000 searches and more than 4,000 arrests around the world.

This Congress simply cannot stop working until we are certain that we have provided all of the resources necessary to stop those who commit crimes by exploiting children. And so this bill, in addition to providing additional legal authorities, also creates an Office on Sexual Violence and Crimes Against Children within the Department of Justice to coordinate sex offender registration and notification programs, directs the Attorney General to provide grants to state and local governments for child sexual abuse prevention programs, and authorizes 200 additional child exploitation prosecutors in U.S. attorneys offices around the country and 20 additional Internet Crimes Against Children, ICAC, task forces.

I urge my colleagues to study this bill carefully. I am hopeful that we can garner enough support to quickly bring it to a vote and pass it out of the Senate.

#### SUMMER OF PEACE: AMONG THE NIMIIPUU

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I rise today as cochair of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Congressional Caucus, which has helped communities and tribes across the country commemorate the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Our goal is to provide resources that promote and enhance tourism opportunities that reflect unique local characteristics, interests, and history along the Lewis and Clark Trail.

Over the last 3 years, America has commemorated this historic journey to the West, celebrating culture and life. This Saturday, we will again recognize the daring journey of the Lewis and Clark expedition that helped discover the West and her vast resources and viewscapes we enjoy today.

The Summer of Peace Signature Event in Idaho is an opportunity for all of us to evaluate the long chain of cause and effect that links past, present, and future.

From the journal entries, we have learned the explorers were not only discoverers and describers of the unknown land, but also sightseers whose experiences depended on the good will and assistance of strangers.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition entered the Nimiipuu, Nez Perce, aboriginal homelands in September of 1805, and with this first chance encounter, they were met with caution. After crossing the daunting Rocky Mountains, the explorers were in dire need of food and shelter. They described the Nimiipuu as friendly, hospitable, and gracious hosts who assisted the expedition.

Without the assistance of tribes such as the Nimiipuu, Lewis and Clark and their party would have likely become lost or died from starvation. The expedition itself heavily relied on those who inhabited the land—their survival depended on American Indians' willingness to share knowledge about the land, its resources, and practical routes across it.

Today, the Nez Perce, Lemhi Shoshone, and other American tribes are working diligently to preserve the heritage and culture that was such a large part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and that played such a significant role in the history of the West. The leadership of these tribes of yesterday and today has helped shape the identity of America and the West.

The Nez Perce Tribe in particular has become very closely involved with the commemoration, and has been an integral part of planning and preparing for Idaho's part of the celebration, including events like the Summer of Peace Signature Event. This event not only honors the contributions of the Nimiipuu then, it recognizes the tradition of peaceful and meaningful relationships that characterize the American West.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HAROLD KELLER PUBLIC SERVICE LEADERSHIP AWARD

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, each year many of America's best and brightest high school students come together to compete in the John C. Stennis National Student Congress. For nearly 30 years Harold Keller has been the driving force behind this event, which has provided thousands of young people an opportunity to develop leadership skills and learn about Congress.

Harold Keller is known as "Mr. Congress" within the National Forensic League, which encompasses the National Student Congress as part of its comprehensive national speech and debate program. Each year he has worked tirelessly to make the week-long competition run smoothly and fairly. But perhaps more importantly, he has also made time to provide personal encouragement and guidance to many of those who take part.

It is this commitment and compassion that has made him not only an integral part of the National Student Congress but also a memorable force in the lives of many students who have participated through the years.

In addition to his leadership of the Student Congress, Harold Keller is a tireless champion of speech and debate education throughout the Nation. He has spent many weekends away from home conducting local and district tournaments and seminars. Despite retiring as a speech and debate teacher at West High School in Davenport, IA, in 2003, Mr. Keller continues his service on the Executive Council of the National Forensic League and continues to provide leadership and inspiration not only to students, but also to teachers and coaches who view him as a mentor. It was in recognition for his lifelong efforts that the National Forensic League inducted him into its Hall of Fame.

Mr. Keller has faithfully lived his life by the philosophy expressed on a poster which hangs in his office quoting the words of Forest Witcraft:

A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was,

The sort of house I lived in or what kind of car I drove.

But the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.

When the 2006 John C. Stennis National Student Congress convenes in Grapevine, TX, June 18–23, with over 420 competitors from throughout the United States, the Stennis Center for Public Service, which sponsors the event, will honor Harold Keller by establishing the Harold Keller Public Service Leadership Award. Beginning next year, the Keller Award will be presented annually to a former Student Congress competitor who has made significant contributions to his or her community, State, or Nation through public service leadership. The Harold