

inspector general were modest in nature. They did not require that anybody be fired or cavalierly dismissed. It called for what is known as an accountability board, something, again, to ensure that the watchdogs are in place to protect this country's security and do it in a fashion that is committed to the American principles of transparency and openness.

I have written Admiral McConnell who, of course, is the head of the national intelligence community, and asked him to direct General Hayden to cease and cease immediately the investigation that is now going on into the work of the inspector general at the Central Intelligence Agency.

It is my view that people who know they are doing the right thing are not afraid of oversight. It is time for the head of the intelligence community, Admiral McConnell, to put an end, and an immediate end, to General Hayden's attempt to muzzle the CIA's inspector general.

I wrap up by saying, again, we are not talking about a matter that is partisan. Senator BOND, who has been so cooperative on these matters relating to accountability and transparency, said it very well. Senator BOND said the inspector general had done great work. In his statement on this matter, Senator BOND noted that the Agency regrettably has a track record of resisting accountability.

So that is what this is all about. The ball is now in Admiral McConnell's court. It is my hope that in the next few days, Admiral McConnell will direct General Hayden to cease this investigation into the work of the CIA's inspector general.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Thereupon, at 1 p.m., the Senate recessed until 2 p.m., and reassembled when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008, Continued

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Louisiana is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3328 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3325

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I will call up amendment No. 3328 which is at

the desk, but in the interim, before I actually call it up and make it pending, I wish to discuss the Vitter amendment No. 3328. Hopefully, in a relatively short period of time, we can actually call it up and make it pending.

This amendment is very simple and very straightforward. In fact, it is something this body has seen before on other bills and has strongly voted for before. It simply prohibits any funds in this appropriations bill from being used to block the reimportation of safe prescription drugs from Canada.

All of us know that sky-high prescription drug prices are a very troubling burden every American family faces. Certainly literally every family I deal with in Louisiana deals with this issue in some form or fashion, often in the context of trying to help elderly parents or grandparents or others with very significant prescription drug costs.

One partial solution to that huge challenge is to allow American consumers to buy prescription drugs in person or through mail order or the Internet from Canada, because precisely the same prescription drugs are available in Canada—in all cases at a dramatically lower cost.

Unfortunately, in this country we have had Federal law that prevents American consumers from doing that in most cases. This amendment and other full-blown bills, some introduced by myself, others introduced by other leaders on the issue, such as Senators DORGAN and SNOWE, would lift those prohibitions and allow American consumers their rightful access to safe, cheaper prescription drugs from Canada.

This amendment is being brought on this appropriations bill for a very simple and legitimate reason. Under the current administration there has been a task force established under the Department of Health and Human Services. That task force was specifically established to coordinate all Federal Government activity by the administration to block reimportation of drugs from Canada and elsewhere. That is governed under the Department of Health and Human Services. That is organized under that Department which is governed by this bill, so this amendment will simply say: No funds in this bill going to the Department can be used for that purpose. That task force has to quit its operation. None of that money can go to support the activity of that task force, which is specifically designed to block American consumers from getting safe, cheaper prescription drugs from Canada and elsewhere.

At this point I believe it has been cleared so I wish to formally call up amendment No. 3328 and make it pending.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. VITTER] proposes an amendment numbered 3328 to amendment No. 3325.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide a limitation on funds with respect to preventing the importation by individuals of prescription drugs from Canada)

On page 79, between lines 4 and 5, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds appropriated in this Act may be used to prevent an individual not in the business of importing a prescription drug (within the meaning of section 801(g) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 381(g)) from importing a prescription drug from Canada that complies with sections 501, 502, and 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 351, 352, and 355).

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, this is virtually exactly the same amendment I proposed with Senator NELSON to the Homeland Security Appropriations bill. That amendment was agreed to in the Senate 68 to 32 on July 11, 2006, and was subsequently signed into law. More recently, this year we came back to the Senate floor with the same amendment on this year's Homeland Security Appropriations bill and that was agreed to by unanimous consent. So the Senate has spoken. The Senate has spoken strongly, by a vote of 68 votes or more, in support of what an even larger percentage of the American people want, and that is free, unfettered access to safe, cheaper drugs from Canada and elsewhere.

This amendment is very simple. It says none of the funds in this act, in this bill before us, can be used to stop Americans from getting the safe, cheaper prescription drugs from Canada. The amendment is very specific to Canada only.

This amendment will take us along the path toward full-blown drug reimportation. Last year we had success in allowing Americans to carry on their person these prescriptions drugs from Canada. This amendment would go further and allow that, not only on an individual American citizen's person, but also by mail order or the Internet, as long as that American citizen is not in the business of wholesaling and selling prescription drugs, as long as it is for his or her personal use.

I hope the Senate, both sides of the aisle come together as we have in the past with a strong, overwhelming majority—in the past it has been 68 votes or more—and pass this amendment and say enough is enough. Let's establish this regime of safe reimportation from Canada and elsewhere. Let's push the administration to put forward the safety mechanisms that they absolutely have the authority and ability to help lower the cost of prescription drugs for all American citizens, particularly our seniors.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this amendment.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ETHIOPIA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, the House of Representatives has recently passed the Ethiopian Democracy and Accountability Act of 2007, H.R. 2003.

Although this legislation states that its purpose is to encourage and facilitate the consolidation of democracy and security in Ethiopia—words right out of the resolution—in reality it focuses on the shortcomings, on the problems that they face, and not on the successes the country has made.

Ethiopia takes great pride in being the oldest independent country in Africa. It continues to be a close friend of the United States, a strong ally in the war on terrorism in the Horn of Africa. I have to say that this is significant because if you kind of use your mental map of northeastern Africa and you think about the terrorist activity that has taken place in the Middle East and how it is now coming down through the Horn of Africa, through Djibouti and that area into the Uganda-Ethiopia area, it is a very significant area right now.

Now, as many of you know, I have had quite an extensive background in Africa. I think I am safe to say that I have been to Africa more than any Senator in the history of America. I have been really tied to that continent and recognize the significance in the future of our country as well as their country. It is an area of strategic importance globally to this Nation.

I have traveled to the country on several occasions, both on my own and as a Member of the Senate and the House. A short while ago, I was there with Congressman BOOZMAN from Arkansas. Throughout my travels in the region, I have met and developed friendships with many political and religious leaders.

In Addis 6 years ago, we found a little baby. The little baby was 3 days old. The baby was almost dead. It was not unusual. In some countries in Africa, they throw away mostly young baby girls. Then after about 3 days, when they die, the dogs get them. We were there before the dogs got there. I have 20 kids and grandkids of whom I am very proud. My daughter Molly had nothing but boys. She always wanted a girl. So we were able to take this little girl from Ethiopia and nurse her back to health. She had several very close calls. She is healthy and has now been here in the United States and is my adopted granddaughter. Her name is Zegita Marie, which is a very common name in Ethiopia. I say that because I do want to impress upon this group that I know something about Ethiopia. I know something about its background. I know something about its significance to our safety.

In Ethiopia, recently, I met with Prime Minister Meles, his wife. I met

with members of the Parliament and with all the individuals there who are trying to do a good job. While there, I saw firsthand their democratic progress and commitment in fighting terrorism. Although I appreciate the increased attention being given to Africa, particularly Ethiopia, I believe the bill is misguided and takes the wrong approach by placing demands on a friend and ally that has made obvious advancements in democracy and human rights. While I continue to agree that the violence and intimidation that took place after the 2005 election was an unnecessary use of excessive force, the Government of Ethiopia has taken significant steps again to regain a democratic process that is fair and respectful of human rights.

On July 20, 2007, following convictions and sentencing, 38 opposition leaders were granted full pardons. All remaining members of the opposition were pardoned and released on August 18, 2007. Since these events, reforms have been made in the election process. So often we use America as a standard by which to measure democracy in other countries. It is the same problem we have in the Middle East. People say they are not reaching the goals we want them to reach, having a democracy in Iraq. Why would they? It took this country several years to come up with a democracy. Why should they be able to do it?

The same thing is true in Africa. There are some 52 countries in Africa. Just recently have they come into democratization. It has been incredibly successful in many of those areas. The United States has recognized the ongoing efforts by the Government of Ethiopia and continues to play an important role for human rights in Ethiopia. The State Department recently hosted a group of opposition political leaders and members of Parliament in DC, providing an opportunity for dialog and reconciliation. By providing training in public relations, human rights and logistics planning and coordination for military procedures, the United States is developing the Ethiopian National Defense Force into a professional and apolitical machine.

We need to understand the significance of what is going on right now. We made a decision about 6 years ago to help the Africans establish five African brigades. They are located in the north, south, east, west, and central. It happens that Ethiopia is the headquarters for the East African Brigade. This is not something we are imposing upon them, but we are saying to them: If you want to do these, we are here to help you. Our idea is, as I mentioned, there is a squeeze in the Middle East. As terrorism starts going down through Djibouti and the Horn of Africa into northeastern Africa, this is an area where if they are prepared to take care of themselves, we would not be sending our troops there. It is a well-conceived idea. There is no one area in Africa that is as significant as northeastern Africa.

Let me digress a little bit. Go to their next-door neighbor, Uganda, northern Uganda. We hear so much about problems in the Sudan and other areas. But we don't hear anything about Uganda. In northern Uganda there is a butcher by the name of Joseph Kony who, for 30 years, has been mutilating little kids. You have heard about the children soldiers. Those soldiers are taken over by these people and trained to fight at ages 10, 11, and 12. Then once they learn to be soldiers, they have to go back to their villages and murder their parents and family. If they don't do that, they dismember them. I have been up there to Gulu and other areas, and I have seen that taking place. This is right next door. This is what is happening in that region. Ethiopia has been our strong ally in the war on terror and stands on the frontlines of the conflict in Africa. The growing instability in Somalia and the Ogaden region, combined with the unresolved border disputes between Ethiopia and Eritrea, creates serious problems. Remember what happened the other day. A few weeks ago, we were sending our troops down to Mogadishu and the Ethiopians were fighting right there by our side. That was not an easy thing for them to do. That endangered them because there are many opposition groups who would then go into Ethiopia, and they paid dearly for supporting us. But they did so. They have remained committed to promoting regional stability and eliminating any staging area for al-Qaida or other terrorist organizations. In 2006, they sent roughly 100,000 troops with us into Somalia, into Mogadishu. We were successful in defeating the Islamic coalition. They did that for us. Despite these advancements, Somalia remains a continued concern for growing extremism and the violence continues to escalate. The Ogaden region which borders Somalia is also a growing place of hostility and Islamic terrorism. The ongoing insurgency in the region has taken a drastic toll on the civilian population, significantly affecting commercial trade and humanitarian aid.

In April of 2007, due to escalating violence, the ENDF initiated a campaign against the insurgency in Ogaden. The ongoing border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea threatens the stability in the Horn of Africa. I have talked to Eritrea, trying to get the two parties together. It hasn't happened yet. But the Eritrean Government, along with extremist organizations in Somalia, is providing support and assistance to the Ogaden National Liberation Front. Our friend in this fight is clearly Ethiopia. The United States remains concerned about human rights violations and the lack of religious and political freedoms in Eritrea. The United States will continue to work with Ethiopia to bring stability to the region and foster respect of human rights and freedom from political or religious persecution.

Ethiopia is so significant to the Horn of Africa. It remains an area of strategic importance in the war on terror. This area is critical to stability of the entire continent of Africa and is a national security interest of the United States. Ethiopia continues to be the central bulwark in the fight to deter the growth and disrupt the influence of Islamic extremism in the region. Our country's strong support of Ethiopia during this significant time is imperative.

In spite of all these successes, in spite of what we have talked about and the significance of Ethiopia, I think we have to oppose H.R. 2033. I have talked to several people who didn't know any differently. They didn't object to this. I think it went through on a UC over there. But a lot of people couldn't find Ethiopia on a map. I don't think they realized the significance. This resolution's idea of encouraging and facilitating is to impose restrictions and ultimatums. These punitive actions could damage the bilateral relationship between the United States and the Government of Ethiopia, as well as derail progress Ethiopia has made in furtherance of democracy and supporting human rights.

I fully support the State Department's assessment. Quite often I am criticized for coming down here and opposing the State Department. More often than not, that is the case. But in this case they are exactly right. They say: The bill risks damaging our ability to influence the Government of Ethiopia, advance reform, and to deliver effective development assistance.

I will only say, then, this is a success story we have had. I can't think of anything worse for the surrounding states, and I would say all other 51 countries in Africa, than if we were to punish the very country that is being friendly to us, is helping us, fighting with us side by side, sending 100,000 troops with American troops down to Somalia and working on our side.

I hope when it comes to this side, if it does come in this form, that we will be able to resoundingly defeat it. I look forward to being in Ethiopia in about 3 weeks. I will certainly hope that I don't have to go over there after having something like this pass the Senate.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3328

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I am going to offer an amendment in a few moments. First, I would like to spend a couple minutes talking about the amendment that was offered by Sen-

ator VITTER. I have a copy of the amendment. The amendment deals with the issue of drug reimportation. It says:

None of the funds appropriated in this Act may be used to prevent an individual not in the business of importing a prescription drug from importing a prescription drug from Canada that complies with sections 501, 502, and 505 of the FDA Cosmetic Act.

I don't have any particular problem with this amendment. It says that the FDA can't do what it is not doing. So that is largely irrelevant to me. It has an appearance of doing something, but it doesn't do anything. At the moment, if you are in Grafton, ND, and you go across the border to Winnipeg, Canada, and buy prescription drugs and bring them across, if you bring across a 90-day supply of prescription drugs for yourself, you are not going to have a problem. They allow a personal reimportation of prescription drugs because very few Americans have the opportunity to drive to Canada to access that. The one area where the Vitter amendment would allow reimportation where there needs to be some safety attached is with respect to Internet sites. But the fact is, those who are now accessing certain Internet sites are doing so, and the FDA is not intervening because they don't have the capability to intervene.

We do have a piece of legislation that is bipartisan. Senator SNOWE, Senator KENNEDY, Senator MCCAIN, Senator GRASSLEY and myself, many of us, helped write the legislation that would allow the reimportation of prescription drugs on a much broader basis, in a manner that is determined to be safe, where we would actually require Internet sites to be registered and inspected. But let me talk about that in just a moment.

Mr. President, I have kept in my desk here in the Senate something I want to show by consent. These are a couple of bottles of Lipitor. Lipitor is, I think, the most common and perhaps the most popular cholesterol-lowering drug. These two bottles contain 20-milligram tablets of Lipitor. As you can see, the bottles of Lipitor are identical, with the exception of the color—one is blue and one is red on the label. Both of these bottles of Lipitor tablets were made in Ireland. They put some in this bottle, they put some in this bottle, and then they start sending them around. They sent this bottle to the United States, and they sent this bottle to Canada.

Now, understand this: This is an FDA-approved drug, produced in an FDA-approved plant in Ireland, sent to our country, sent to Canada—the same pill, put in the same bottle, made in the same place, FDA-approved. Difference? Well, one has a red label, one has a blue label. And there is another very big difference: one costs twice as much. There is a 96-percent higher price on the one the Americans get to purchase. Difference? Well, no difference in the pill, no difference in the

bottle; it is just the American consumer gets to pay twice as much. Now, why is that the case? Well, I could hold up a dozen bottles of medicine and describe many popular brand names and tell you exactly the same thing.

In fact, I will tell you a story. Sitting on a bale of straw once at the farmstead in central North Dakota on a Sunday afternoon, visiting with a group of people, was an 82-, 84-year-old farmer. I was in the farmyard visiting with some farmers at an afternoon stop, and this old codger, a wonderful old guy, said: "One of the problems me and the Mrs. have had—yes, that is what he said—"One of the problems me and the Mrs. have had is being able to afford prescription drugs. My wife has been fighting breast cancer for a long time. For the last 3 or 4 years, she has been fighting breast cancer. And do you know what? Every 3 months we have had to drive to Canada to buy Tamoxifen to fight her breast cancer. Why do we do that? Because we save 80 percent on the cost, and that is the only way we can afford to buy the medicine, the Tamoxifen for my wife to fight her breast cancer."

Isn't that something? This guy sitting on a bale of straw, talking to me about what he has to do every 3 months to be able to afford the medicine his wife needs to fight breast cancer.

Now, that is Tamoxifen. We pay, in some cases, 2 times more or 3 times more for the same medicine, so we then have a woman fighting cancer and then fighting the issue of having to pay 2 or 3 times as much for the medicine.

Now, first of all, this is unfair. There is no circumstance under which we ought to ask the American people to pay the highest drug prices in the world for FDA-approved drugs. It is not fair, and it should not happen.

Now, how does it happen that they can enforce this, the pharmaceutical industry can enforce this? Well, they have a law that says the only ability to import drugs into this country is by the pharmaceutical manufacturer itself, the company itself. They are the ones who are able to import. Now, I just mention to you that as a matter of practice, they allow a personal supply of drugs to come across the border for about 90 days' worth of drugs. They do that. But, otherwise, if you are a licensed pharmacist or a wholesaler and you buy an FDA-approved drug, you cannot bring it into this country.

By contrast, let me just describe this: 40 percent of the active ingredients in prescription drugs in this country come from China and India. Forty percent of the active ingredients in our prescription drugs come from China and India.

Let me tell you another statistic that I think is interesting. In this country, we had 1,200-plus inspections of pharmaceutical plants that are producing medicines for the American people—1,200 inspections. Forty percent of the active ingredients for our prescription drugs comes from China

and India, and we have had, in 2006, 16 inspections in China and 62 inspections in India—1,222 inspections in the United States. Isn't that interesting?

I tell you all that as a bit of history just to say this issue of prescription drugs is not new. A bipartisan group of us has worked for a long while on this issue, and we are going to win this issue. It has taken us longer than we had hoped, but we are going to win this issue because it is not fair for the American people to be charged the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs.

We have so far not been able to prevail, not because someone comes to the floor of the Senate and thumbs their suspender and tugs in their trousers and puffs out like a puff adder and says: I stand up here for the pharmaceutical industry; the American people ought to be charged the highest price in the world. Nobody has ever done that. There are other ways to try to derail legislation like this. But, ultimately, I think we will win. We have a wide bipartisan group of Senators who believe we must fix this. Now, how do we fix it? We fix it in a way that allows the reimportation of prescription drugs only from FDA-approved plants, only in circumstances where we apply pedigrees and lot numbers so you can track it back. For example, you could not import from an Internet site unless that Internet site had been inspected and certified to make sure this is a safe source from which to order prescription drugs.

We have a piece of legislation we believe—and almost everyone who has testified in hearings believes—solves all of those problems, including dramatically increasing the security of all the other issues that are now being complained about with respect to counterfeit drugs. How does it happen we have counterfeit drugs? Well, it happens because we do not have enough inspections. We do not have enough attention to these things. We do not have a pedigree requirement. There are a number of things our legislation would require. But at that point, we would allow the American people to have access to this market and be able to shop for an FDA-approved drug from a country in which they pay one-half, one-fourth, and in some cases one-tenth the price the American consumer is charged.

So let me say, I do not object to the Vitter amendment. I would hope they would just take it. It has been offered to other issues. I would just say, however, that it really does not do much because it is saying to the agency: Don't do what you are not doing. I do not have objection to that. But I do want to say this: There is a serious approach with respect to prescription drug issues that we need to get about the business of dealing with, and we are trying very hard to get it to the floor and get it passed. We will get that done at some point soon, in my judgment.

Having said that, I would like to offer an amendment to the underlying bill. Before I do, I think this is not only an obligation but an opportunity for me to say to Senator HARKIN and Senator SPECTER and others who have worked on the legislation that I think they have done an awfully good job in putting together legislation that invests in people's lives and invests in the health of this country, and I appreciate their work a lot. So I just want to say thanks. This is a big piece of legislation. It is hard to put together. It is not an easy job to carry this to the floor of the Senate, so thanks for what they have done.

AMENDMENT NO. 3335 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3325

Mr. President, if there is an amendment pending, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside so I might send an amendment to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The pending amendment is set aside.

The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. DORGAN] proposes an amendment numbered 3335 to amendment No. 3325.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To increase funding for the State Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program of the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention)

On page 59, line 22, insert before the semicolon the following: “, of which \$5,000,000 shall be made available to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as an additional amount to make grants under the State Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program”.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, this issue is not a large issue in the context of the bill that has been brought to the floor of the Senate—it deals with \$5 million of resources—but I want to talk just for a few moments about it. It deals with the issue of heart disease and stroke.

There is no one in this Chamber, I expect, who has not been affected by heart disease in dramatic ways. I lost a beautiful young daughter to heart surgery, and I think of her every day. I have dedicated a lot of my time and interest in working with the American Heart Association and many others to find the resources to continue to invest in the research and unlock the mysteries of this terrible disease.

It is estimated that about 80 million American adults—1 in 3 males and females—suffer from heart disease. It is estimated that an American dies from cardiovascular disease every 35 seconds in this country. It has a very steep price tag. I know it. My family knows it. Perhaps, I would guess, every Mem-

ber of the Senate knows it from having lost a friend, an acquaintance, a family member. The medical expenses attributable to heart disease in this country are about \$430 billion a year, including lost productivity. But the good news is that this is one of those diseases where we have made substantial progress. In the past 50 years, the fight against heart disease and stroke has been pretty remarkable.

I recall Senator HARKIN, and myself, and Senator SPECTER—I think there were five or six or seven of us who decided we were going to double the investment in the National Institutes of Health. As I recall, about then we were funding it at around \$12 billion a year. A group of us decided: What better investment in this country's future than to decide to double the amount of money at the National Institutes of Health to research and to discover opportunities to cure these terrible diseases and treat these awful diseases. I am so proud of what has been done. It is pretty remarkable.

I heard this morning at a hearing over in the Commerce Committee something I have heard so often that I am so sick and tired of. One of our colleagues said there is nothing the Federal Government does that is really worth anything, nothing the Federal Government manages that ever works out.

Well, let me tell you something. Dr. Francis Collins is one of the significant people who engaged in something that, by the way, came from earmarked funding, started here in the U.S. Congress, right here in the U.S. Senate, the Human Genome Project. Do you know that? As a result of the Human Genome Project, we now have unlocked the mysteries of the genetic code. We now, for the first time, have an owner's manual for the human body. Do you know what that means? Well, not a lot of people understand it every day, but every single day, scientists and researchers are understanding those genetic codes and making giant strides in beginning to find cures for diseases.

Dr. Francis Collins came back from Cambridge, England, about, oh, maybe 2 months ago, and I saw him at Dulles Airport when he landed. He had gone for a conference in England about how the researchers were using the genetic information from the Human Genome Project. He said: I thought it was going to take much, much longer. What is going on now is breathtaking in using the Human Genome Project to find the opportunity to treat and to cure some of these diseases. He said it is breathtaking.

That is the Federal Government. This is a civil servant, by the way. As to the research that is going on at NIH, these are people on the Federal payroll. So to my colleagues who think nothing works, let me just tell you something: There is only one place on Earth where the Human Genome Project reached success. And, yes, it was a collaboration, but we did it. It is going to improve lives, and it is going to unlock

the mysteries of terrible diseases. It was a good thing to do.

But my point is, Senator HARKIN and Senator SPECTER were two—and I think Senator FEINSTEIN—and I was one who decided we were going to double the research funding at the National Institutes of Health. Guess what that has done for this country. It allows me to stand here and say we are making great progress on heart disease. We really are. The survival rates for cancer are up. So we are making progress.

The reason I wanted to offer this amendment is this amendment deals with heart disease and stroke. We know the risk factors for heart disease and stroke. We know if you understand the risk factors, you can substantially reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke—by not smoking, by maintaining a healthy weight, and avoiding diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol. We know you can do that. In fact, by taking these steps, individuals often can add 10 years to their lives. So we have made some progress by making investments. There is a long way to go. We have 105 million Americans who have high cholesterol and 72 million Americans have high blood pressure, so we have to do a much better job of educating the public about cardiovascular disease. That is the goal of what is called the State Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program at CDC.

What I have offered, very simply, as I close, is a \$5 million addition to the State Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program at CDC. It is a program that works. We know it works. It needs this additional funding to make it more widely available. This initiative will help States create the programs, the private-public sector partnerships, that will help individuals in controlling blood pressure, lowering cholesterol, and learning the signs and symptoms of heart disease and stroke.

This is a program that we know works. I am hoping that finding an offset, which I have suggested in my amendment, would allow us to accept the amendment. I did not intend to take quite this length of time, but I needed only to say to Senator HARKIN and Senator SPECTER how much I appreciate their work, and my hope is that having highly complimented them, they will be motivated to accept this amendment. I compliment them even if they do not accept it, but I have high hopes.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from North Dakota for his longstanding effort to give our consumers a better shake when it comes to drug prices in this country. I also thank him for all of his help and support over the years for funding for NIH. I know of his intense interest, of course, in heart disease. The amendment is a good amendment. It is one I can support. We are trying to work it out now, of course, in terms of the offset. Our staffs will be working on it and hopefully we will be able to have that worked out.

Hopefully we can set this amendment aside for right now and move on to other amendments, but I assure my friend from North Dakota we will get this worked out one way or the other.

Also, on the Vitter amendment, I understand we don't have a clearance on that either at this time, so I ask to set that aside also so we can move on with other amendments.

AMENDMENT NO. 3336 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3325

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside, and I send an amendment to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from California [Mrs. FEINSTEIN], for herself and Mr. KYL, proposes an amendment numbered 3336 to amendment No. 3325.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide funding for a feasibility study on the child abuse and neglect registry)

On page 64, line 5, insert before the period the following: "Provided further, That \$500,000 shall be available to complete a feasibility study for a National Registry of Substantiated Cases of Child Abuse or Neglect, as described in section 633(g) of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (Public law 109-248), and the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit the report described in section 633(g)(2) of such Act not later than 1 year after date of enactment of this Act".

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, let me quickly give the background on this. In May of 2007, Senator KYL, Senator DOLE, Senator BOXER, Senator LOTT, and myself sent a letter to Michael Leavitt, the Secretary of HHS. We pointed out that the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act was passed in July of 2006. Pursuant to that act, there were to be two registries set up. The first registry was to be located at the Department of Justice and it would require the establishment of a national sex offender registry which would track details of convicted sex offenders and make the information electronically available to authorities in all jurisdictions, and even the public at large. This registry is up and functioning.

The second registry authorized by the new law was a national registry of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect. That was directed to be located at the Department of Health and Human Services. This registry is a different but equally vital resource intended for child protection authorities only. Believe it or not, each State already collects information on substantiated cases of abuse and neglect, but

once an investigation is under way, adult perpetrators of violence or neglect on children need only to move to another State to escape, and this is the difficult part, because there may be no trace, no record kept that the new State can easily access. In this way, some children may never escape abuse in their own home, because the offender can simply move.

Essentially what we have in this amendment is a request for funding of \$500,000 to complete the necessary feasibility study which is the first step to the establishment of a national child abuse registry. I have spoken to the chairman of the committee, Senator HARKIN. I submit this on behalf of Senator KYL and myself. I haven't had a chance to talk to the others—Senators BOXER, LOTT, and DOLE—but I am sure they would be associated with this as well. It is \$500,000 for the feasibility study, and my hope is it can be accepted.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from California again for her championing this issue for a long time. This amendment from Senator FEINSTEIN will provide funds for a feasibility study so no offset is needed since funds are set aside within the existing total for HHS general departmental management. The Adam Walsh Child Protection Safety Act of 2006 required the Secretary of HHS to create an electronic national registry of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect. They have not yet created that registry. There have been some problems that have been raised about this, and the feasibility study amendment Senator FEINSTEIN has offered will address several implementation concerns regarding the establishment of the registry.

So again, I support the amendment. We can accept it. I believe it has been cleared on both sides, so we will accept the amendment.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the chairman and ranking member. It is my understanding that—we were told, at least—HHS couldn't do this because they didn't have the money, so this would make that money available and hopefully we will get it. So I thank the Senator very much.

Mr. HARKIN. Yes, the \$500,000 will get the job done.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there further debate on the amendment?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 3336) was agreed to.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I know the Senator from Alabama is going to speak. He was kind enough to let me make these comments since we are on the Labor-HHS appropriations bill in the field of health. There are a lot of provisions in this appropriations bill that are absolutely necessary.

On the subject of health, we have a critical vote that is being taken tomorrow in the House of Representatives. It is on the question of the override of the President's veto of the Children's Health Insurance Program. This is a plan that was established about 10 years ago, recognizing that there are children whose health care needs are not paid for by Medicaid because their parents earn too much money to qualify for Medicaid but whose family incomes for those children are such that they are not high enough for the family to afford health insurance for their children.

What is the cost to society down the road if children's health is not addressed in those early years and medical complications are manifest in later years? Ultimately, the cost to society overall is much greater. So it makes good common sense, even good common financial sense, that we try to address health care needs for children, and that is an appropriate role for the Federal Government to assist if the parents of those children cannot afford that health care.

That is what the Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP, is all about. There are different people who handle it different ways in different States. In my State of Florida, we recognized this was a problem, and we set up what was called the Healthy Kids Program under Federal law, of which there was a program to expand health insurance distributed through the schools so we had a point of contact—with an eligibility of the child according to their eligibility in the School Lunch Program—which was a determination of whether the child met that family income level. It was a tremendously successful program before this Federal program was ever set up 10 years ago.

Now we are at the moment of truth of whether we are going to reauthorize this program and whether we are going to expand it.

There are, for example, in my State of Florida, 700,000 children who are not covered by health insurance. This new program of expansion to cover the 6.6 million currently enrolled kids, plus another 3.2 million kids—a modest increase—is only going to cover about 350,000 to 400,000 more in my State of those 700,000. It is not going to get all the kids, but at least it is a step in the right direction.

Back in that early program, before this Federal program was set up, I was the chairman of the board of the Healthy Kids Corporation that reached

these children. Time after time, we would have parents come to us in tears to what this program had done for that child who had this or that malady and that because they had health insurance, in a lot of cases, through preventive care, they diagnosed that malady and got the proper treatment for the child.

There is nothing like the agony of a parent who cannot provide the health care for their child because they cannot financially afford it, and that is what this program, the Children's Health Insurance Program, set out to do.

In the course of the debate on this legislation, and if the House of Representatives tomorrow overrides the veto, it is going to come to us. I think we have the number of votes in the Senate to override. There will be a lot of speeches about the legislation. It is amazing to me the number of misstatements that have been made about this bill and the likes of respected Senators, such as Senator GRASSLEY of Iowa and Senator HATCH of Utah, have come to this Chamber and pointed out that misinformation and those misstatements about this bill. There are misstatements even coming out of the White House in the veto message.

This legislation does not try to substitute adults for children. The whole program is about providing insurance for children. Of the 6.6 million children who are currently enrolled under CHIP, 91 percent of them are in families with incomes at or below 200 percent of the poverty level. That is approximately at or below \$40,000 of income for a family of four.

It simply does not provide—and I will not go into the details—this is not a program for adults. About the only adults who are going to get some care under this legislation are pregnant women. It will allow the States the option of providing coverage to pregnant women, but the pregnant women are the very women who are about to have the child, and we want to make sure she has the help in order to deliver a healthy baby.

These scare stories people throw up about this being for adults—as a matter of fact, the reform legislation cracks down on a lot of the potential eligibility that the States were allowed to get waivers in order to cover adults. This stops a lot of that practice.

Contrary to what I have heard other people saying, this legislation does not provide insurance for families that make over \$80,000 a year.

It becomes clear, it seems to this Senator, that it is common sense that when it comes to children's health, that is in everybody's interest. No matter whether you come from a red State or a blue State, whether you sit on that side of the aisle or this side of the aisle, healthy children is the common-sense interest for us to have for all of America.

I certainly look forward to the House providing an override, and if, for some

reason, they do not provide that override of the President's veto and we get it, that we can do the override, and then we are going to have to continue to work to ensure that we achieve a reauthorization of this bill that puts the health of our children ahead of partisan politics.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

AMENDMENT NO. 3324

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I wish to take a few moments now and call up my amendment. I wish to make some comments about amendment No. 3324. It is an important amendment that deals with an issue that is too often overlooked, and I will share my thoughts about it.

The amendment will restore funding to the Office of Labor and Management Standards at the Department of Labor by increasing funding at OLMS by \$5 million. There is an important principle involved here. Union members should have the same protection of their moneys that stockholders have in businesses. In many ways, they deserve better protection than stockholders.

The Office of Labor and Management Standards is to union transparency and integrity what the SEC, the Securities and Exchange Commission, is to corporate accountability. Yet for fiscal year 2008, the Senate appropriations bill that is now before the Senate funded the SEC at \$905 million. That is \$12 million above the fiscal year 2007 level and at the requested level of the President's budget.

The Office of Labor and Management Standards is the only Federal agency created to protect rank-and-file union members. It enforces the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, which requires financial disclosure by labor unions and union officers. It requires disclosure, that is all it does.

This office audits, in addition, union books to detect embezzlement and other thefts of union members' dues and ensures fair elections of union officers.

The mission of the OLMS, referred to on this chart, is to provide union financial transparency; that is, it would require the officers to tell their members how they are spending their money. That is all it does. It does not tell them what they must spend it on. It requires that they give a fair report of the money they obtain from their members.

It has as its mission to protect union financial integrity. As I will point out, we have had quite a problem with that issue over the years.

It will safeguard union democracy. That is fair elections in unions.

All those points are important issues. Anyone close to this issue for the last 50 years knows we have had constant problems in this area. This is popular with the union members and is the right thing for us to do.

This office has been funded at \$47.8 million, and it has shown big results. It

is a small agency that is showing big results, and I will talk about that point.

From 2001 to 2007, OLMS investigations have resulted in 796 convictions—that is since 2001—and have resulted in court-ordered restitutions to unions and to union members of \$101 million. Those are pretty good results.

I am going to explain in a moment how they are vastly underfunded already. We need more. I will go into that issue in a moment.

Since 2001, OLMS has recovered, as I noted, \$101 million. I doubt that is all that was stolen. No doubt it is not all that was stolen. This is what was actually ordered and recovered in restitution. I would say that, by any standard, \$101 million is a lot of money.

Since 2001, the work by OLMS has resulted in convictions and restitution, so we are talking about an agency that is working on behalf of the American worker, ensuring the American worker knows how the union dues they have contributed are being spent. When it is clear their money is being abused, OLMS works to fairly return the money to them; this is a good program and an important program.

Embezzlement is not something the American people support. We as a Congress are focusing on transparency in a lot of different areas, and it is embarrassing that our colleagues have decided to cut funding in the one office in the whole Federal Government, the only one, that is required to carry out this job with regard to our unions.

Let me show this chart. As a Federal prosecutor myself for a number of years, I have to say I am impressed with these numbers. Since 2001, 95 percent of indictments that have been produced as a result of OLMS investigations have resulted in convictions. That is a pretty good success rate. So it is clear they are not picking on people who have made honest mistakes or where honest errors are occurring and people are doing what they are supposed to do as union leaders.

In fact, they have offices strategically placed around the country. Every union in the country has OLMS employees who live within driving distances of their offices. They are ready to help the union leaders figure out how to complete any required forms and disclosures. They are prepared to assist in any problems that arise in union elections. They are a resource and were not created as a punishing tool for unions.

We are not, as a part of this amendment, and those who support this amendment, out to kick labor unions around. We are trying to make sure they comply with the law and ensure that the rank-and-file members have someone watching out for them and their money. It is clear from these statistics that there is still a need for oversight, sunlight, and transparency. That is clear. We have a problem out there and it still exists. It is painfully clear we need to be monitoring union

officials who are taking bribes—and some have been convicted of that—who are involved in racketeering and stealing hard-earned money from working Americans.

Since 2001, OLMS has been able to audit only 3,275 of the 26,000 unions on record. They are supposed to be auditing these unions, but, in fact, since 2001, they have only been able to audit 12½ percent of the unions on record. I have to tell you, if you do more audits, you are going to have less criminal activity. It is when people know they are not being watched, know they are not likely to be audited, that they take chances and make mistakes and get themselves in trouble and cost their union members a lot of money.

OLMS, in the year 2000, only did 204 audits out of well over 20,000 unions. That is the equivalent of a union being audited once every 133 years. Last year, OLMS did 736 audits, which translates into an audit every 33 years. So we are doing better, but we are still a long way from a regular audit program.

Now, with the \$2 million reduction in funding—and you have a cost-of-living increase with salaries and electricity and all those kinds of things that tend to go up—if you have taken a flat net reduction of \$2 million in funding, there will be approximately 350 fewer audits each year. That is about half.

Shouldn't we be seeking more audits, considering that from the 3,267 audits that were completed between 2000 and 2007 there came 827 indictments and 796 convictions? I think so. I think this is a good investment for our country.

Now, in the very few reports OLMS audited, evidence was found in many of them that warranted other action. In my home State of Alabama, 41 audits were completed, and from that came 20 convictions; that is, almost half the audits resulted in some conviction.

Here in the District of Columbia, 30 audits were completed, resulting in 27 convictions. One of those was the Washington Teachers Union. Let me give that example. On October 23 of last year, in the U.S. District Court, Cheryl Martin, the daughter of a former Washington Teachers Union executive assistant to the president, Gwendolyn Hemphill, was sentenced to a probationary sentence—which she should be most thankful for, it appears to me—for her role in an embezzlement scheme which defrauded the union of \$4.6 million. Right here, just last October. She pled guilty to conspiracy to laundering money and for assisting her husband Michael Martin in laundering more than \$500,000 in Washington Teachers Union members' funds, most of which were funneled back to Hemphill and the then WTU president, Barbara Bullock.

Well, that is quite a lot—\$4.6 million stolen from only about 5,000 union members. That is about \$1,000 a member. This isn't chickenfeed, it is real money. I have heard stories of how some of those very same teachers who

lost their money through union embezzlement are the same ones buying pencils, books, and supplies for their students out of their own pockets. So despite what some might say, convicting people who steal from unions and seeking restitution is not anti-union activity; it is pro-union activity.

There are many cases such as this that need transparency to come to light. Since 2001, the administration, President Bush, and Secretary Chao have worked hard to reach consensus on how best to work with the unions to get voluntary compliance on disclosure forms that the law requires them to make. But, still, many unions are not reporting as they are required to do. This chart shows, unfortunately, that the compliance rate for unions is only 64 percent, with 36 percent failing to comply.

That is an unacceptable number. If this were the Securities and Exchange Commission, we would not accept the fact that our stockholders and employees are placed at risk because those entities, those corporations, are not being monitored. If it were the Federal Election Commission and we didn't submit our financial disclosures on time, people would be very critical. Somebody would probably ask that we step down from our offices as we would be committing a violation of the law. However, we don't seem to be as willing to protect our workers and the money they pay in to their unions.

The way this works here, we have public access when these forms are reported, the ones that do, and you can call or go to the Department of Labor in person or get online information at www.unionreports.gov and review these reports.

Now, union members care about this. It is most valuable information to union members—those people in the town who know the community, they know the company, they know the union, they know their coworkers, the stewards, the union reps, the employees. By law they are required to have this information to see what is being done with the money. Union members want to know how their dues are being spent, and it is clear they are looking to see how their money is spent.

Between May of 2006 and May of 2007, in the past year, there were 767,000 hits on the OLMS Web site, an average of over 2,000 a day. People are looking to see how their bosses are spending their money. According to a 2004 Zogby poll, 71 percent of union members want disclosure. They want to know how their funds are being spent. The foundations of this transparency were established in the 1950s when the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 was passed.

Transparency and sunlight—full disclosure of financial gains and losses. These are the tenets that Senator Kennedy, John Kennedy, former President Kennedy, and the McClellan Commission report, set in place 50 years ago to

protect union members, our hard-working Americans, from corruption, bribery, coercion, or maybe worse.

The data shows the actions OLMS is taking in pursuing corruption are spot on. They are doing what they should be doing; they just don't have enough resources now to do it. They certainly don't need a cut in their budget.

When President Bush took office and Secretary Elaine Chao was appointed to be the Secretary of Labor—and she has done a fantastic job, in my opinion—they quickly learned that most union members didn't even know they had rights or what agency would enforce those rights if they were abused. Now there are posters placed at every union workplace stating clearly the rights and duties of unions and employees.

The funding increase proposed in this amendment, which I will be offering, I believe is warranted as OLMS is showing substantive results that are benefiting rank-and-file members, and providing valuable resources to union leaders as so many of them work to uphold the law, but they need assistance in doing that correctly. In fact, the Department of Labor has gone to great lengths to ensure that labor union officials have all the help they need and that the reporting requirements are reasonable.

To make the rules fair, you must sometimes work out problems you have and decrease the burden. Over the years, the Secretary has consulted with labor leaders, has made the forms easier to understand, has worked closely with the AFL-CIO and other unions to create exceptions, exemptions, and to simplify reporting requirements where possible. But you have to know where the money is being spent ultimately. DOL last year added examples and further guidance to one of the forms that is required, the LM 30.

OLMS has been funded below the requested level for the last several years. This is beginning to accumulate in a way that is hurting their ability to meet their needs. This is the level requested by the President to keep this agency on track, and we have been seeing a decline in funding. Last year, the budget was \$47.753 million. This year, the committee bill cuts it by \$2 million to \$45.737 million. With all due respect, I think that is a bad decision. We have a lot of increases in this agency. It is a very important agency, but that is a major reduction when you see it has continued to fall behind what we projected their growth to be.

This agency has seen difficult times. It does seem to be an issue that is political, I have to say. During the Clinton administration, OLMS was cut to only 260 employees. Understaffed, the division was purposefully and expressly prohibited from even carrying out the enforcement duties the law required. This administration has at least attempted to restore resources to OLMS so it can carry out its mission. Even so, the President's fiscal year 2008

staffing request for only 369 FTEs—that is full-time personnel—is still below the 1985 level, which was 463.

Now, as you can see, the trend has turned away from providing even those resources, resulting in a more substantial cut. It indicates to me that if we maintain this level, this Congress is not interested in seeing that this agency, the only one in Government empowered and given the responsibility of enforcing integrity in unions, would be reduced in its ability to do so, to a precarious level indeed.

In fact, OLMS was the only enforcement agency, the only one in the Labor Department, that received a budget cut during the congressional markup of that bill. It is the only one in this bill on the floor now, the only office at this agency, that got a cut. The Appropriations Committee increased the Department's overall budget by \$937 million above what the President requested for the Department of Labor. The only cut in the Department's budget, which totals \$10 billion, was an \$2 million cut for OLMS.

Senator John F. Kennedy was instrumental in passing this act in 1959 and the act says that a member:

... must have access to union financial records and has the right to recover misappropriated union assets on behalf of a union when the union fails to do so.

That is what the act called for. Senator Kennedy spoke on it aggressively. Then Senator Kennedy, later President Kennedy, said:

The racketeers will not like it, the antilabor extremists around the country will not like it, but I am confident the American people, and the overwhelmingly honest rank and file union members, will benefit from this measure for many years to come.

That was in 1959, almost 50 years ago. He said they will benefit from this law for many years to come, and I submit they have: 796 crooks have been convicted, \$101 million in restitution has been received in the last 6 years.

Senator ROBERT BYRD, a champion of union rights who, I have to tell you—isn't it something? is still a Member of this Senate—he was active in this debate. During that time, he got a letter from a member of the UMWA in West Virginia. They sent him a letter condemning his vote for it.

Senator BYRD, who still retains great respect in the union membership—and leadership, too, for that matter—this is how he responded on the floor of the Senate:

The bill which passed the Congress will not hurt honest unions, and it will give added protection to the rank-and-file members in the unions. Honest union leaders have nothing to fear from the legislation ... the corruption and racketeering that have been revealed in the fields of both labor and management made it imperative that some kind of legislation be enacted.

I applaud the efforts of OLMS to pursue those who are misusing their power over our hard-working union members, those who are using that money for their personal benefit, abusing their position by squandering the hard-earned dollars of working Americans.

Let me mention this story about the United Transportation Union. I think it highlights what can happen when there is no consistent oversight. I have a photograph that was taken in the course of an investigation that shows a person handing over money in a corrupt transaction. What is happening here is that the money is being given by a designated UTU legal counsel named Victor Bieganowski. The person receiving the money was John Russell Rookard, 58, of Olalla, WA, a top special assistant to Byron Alfred Boyd. Mr. Boyd was president of the UTU at the time.

This picture shows the handing over of the money. There was an undercover agent working there and they recorded the deal.

In 2004, Boyd, the international president of UTU, the nation's largest railroad operating union, pleaded guilty to participating in a bribery scheme involving Houston lawyers. Union officials extorted bribes from the lawyers in exchange for access to union members who might have been injured so they could file lawsuits.

As a March 12, 2004, Houston Chronicle article explains, Byron Alfred Boyd, Jr., 57, of Seattle, is the last of four officials of the United Transportation Union to plead guilty—he admitted that he did it—in a plan to extort bribes from the lawyers in exchange for access to injured union members. He admitted using the bribes obtained from the lawyers, extorted from lawyers, to gain control of the union. He used it for his political strength too. He persuaded former union president Charles Leonard Little, 69, to resign in exchange for \$100,000 and a new pickup, so Boyd could assume the post. He wanted to be president of the union. He goes to the former President and offers him \$100,000 and a new pickup to resign so he could be president.

Mr. Little should have been a little bit more careful before he resigned because when he resigned he never got his money, but he was out of office. Little also pleaded guilty last year, as did the former union insurance director, Ralph John Dennis, 51. The man in this picture, John Russell Rookard, 58, of Olalla, WA, a top assistant to Boyd, also pleaded guilty. The indictment alleged that some union presidents determined which lawyers were to be included on the union's designated counsel list. That position was coveted and very valuable because he gave those lawyers easier access to get clients from union members who might have been injured. They would therefore be able to make a lot of money off lucrative personal injury lawsuits.

At the time of the indictments, 56 lawyers were on the list, including 6 in Texas. Unfortunately, we have example after example of this kind of disregard for doing the right thing with the money of our hardworking Americans.

On August 31, let me note, Judy A. Thurman, former treasurer of Federated Independent Texas Union Local

900, pled guilty in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas to embezzlement of union funds totaling \$164,268.50. That is a lot of money.

We also have election violations. Assisting labor unions when problems arise in elections is an OLMS responsibility. One union officer generated over 300 phony ballots using the union's computer. He marked the ballots for himself—who else, I suppose—placed them in false return envelopes and returned them to the union, where they were subsequently counted in the election. Those kinds of things are hard for an average union member to understand, ascertain or prove. An agency such as this, that knows how to investigate and prove these things, can make sure our elections in unions are legitimate.

All of us in this Senate know we have to have good staff, and Liz Stillwell, with me, is very much that. So staff capacity at OLMS is an important reason I have introduced this amendment. In 1992, staffing at OLMS was around 392. During the Clinton administration, it was cut back to 260. Today it is back up to 315, which is a little better. As you can see from this chart, the cuts have hit the Department hard. As a result, they are still unable to audit more than 2 to 4 percent of the total unions each year. Only 12 percent of unions have ever been audited. Of those audited, there have been 796 convictions. It tells us something.

Let me say this. I spent most of my professional career as a Federal prosecutor. I prosecuted labor cases. But let me say, if you don't want to have these convictions, if you don't want to have this kind of theft from union members, let me tell you how to stop it. Have regular audits. Once everybody knows the money is going to be accounted for, that somebody is going to be watching closely, they are not going to steal. It is when there are no controls that people feel they are out on their own in some town or city or wherever, and nobody is looking, there is lots of money coming through the headquarters there and they have an opportunity to get it and they think no one is going to know it—temptation takes over.

It will happen to anybody, not just union members or business people; it could happen to anybody when that kind of money is lying around. It happens in churches. People steal from churches. They have an opportunity and nobody has an ability to watch and account for it. If we want to end this kind of thing and strengthen unions and create a better reputation and environment, we need to step up prosecutions and we will begin to see a major reduction in crime, fraud, and abuse. That is the way it is.

Since 1959, when Senators BYRD and KENNEDY and other leaders passed the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, these priorities that I mentioned have been the guiding

standards of this agency. The standards are to promote union democracy, protect union members' funds, protect American workers and fight labor racketeering.

This \$2 million cut is not aimed at an anti-union agency. It is, I have to say, an act that appears political and it appears it is conceding and giving in to union leaders and forgetting the interests of union members.

I know a lot of the union leadership have complained about this law. They don't want to have to file a reporting document. They don't want to have to put it in—36 percent of them are not getting it in on time or at all. But who are we representing? I say we ought to represent union members and 71 percent of them want this disclosure; over 700,000 last year checked their union leadership reports on the Web site to see how their money was being spent. What is wrong with that?

When it was created by Senators KENNEDY and BYRD and others, it was not to shut down unions, it was to shut down theft, waste, fraud, abuse, criminal activity. Of around 26,000 unions active today, only 2 to 4 percent have been audited each year since 2001; only 12 percent have been audited at all. A quarter of the unions audited, 25 percent, have been found to be in violation of the law; 75 have been correct, were not found in violation. But 25 percent were found in violation. If we did those audits more regularly, we would have fewer problems with compliance, we would have fewer criminal convictions, we would have less restitution to have to be paid as a result of theft and abuse of the money.

This transparency will help us there. When you turn on the lights, you can actually see what is going on and take action to fix the wrongdoing. So I hope somehow we can work through this.

I know the managers of this bill have done a tremendous job. They had thousands and thousands of people making suggestions on thousands and thousands of issues. Then, to have somebody such as me come in and tell them this is what I think you ought to do—one more time, I am sure our colleagues such as Senator HARKIN and SPECTER get tired of everybody's complaining. But I think we ought to work on this. I think this reduction in funding cuts from an agency that is actually doing a good job.

We ought to encourage that agency to do a better job and actually increase their funding more. So I am asking simply that \$5 million be put back in, which would bring it a little bit above last year's appropriations for the agency so they can at least stay on track of inflation and everything to continue at the same level of auditing and investigating they are now doing. I wish we could do more. Frankly, I wish we would. This would be my suggestion.

I continue to look forward to perhaps seeing if we could reach some sort of accord on this. I ask my colleagues to study it carefully. I urge them to vote in support of this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3339 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3325

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I have an amendment I am offering on behalf of Senator SMITH of Oregon. I send it to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendment is set aside.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. HARKIN], for Mr. SMITH, proposes an amendment numbered 3339 to amendment No. 3325.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide a technical correction to suicide prevention grants authorized under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act)

On page 49, line 19, insert before the period the following: "Provided further, That Section 520E(b)(2) of the Public Health Service Act shall not apply to funds appropriated under this Act for fiscal year 2008".

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, this is a 1-year technical fix requested by Senator SMITH. These are the State suicide prevention grants authorized under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act. It is a simple technical correction to enable HHS to issue youth suicide grants to States this year. It has no cost. It has been cleared by the authorizers on both sides of the aisle, and we are prepared to accept the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 3339) was agreed to.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thought I might take this bit of lag time on the floor while we are waiting for Senators to offer amendments—which I hope will happen, if there are amendments; I am not trying to encourage any. I am saying if there are

amendments, Members should come and offer them because now is a good time—to talk about the bill and what this debate is all about, why this bill is so important. I say that because the President yesterday sent down his policy statement and said he was going to veto the bill because it spends too much money, that it has to stay within his constraints.

I want to make it clear, we stay within our budget, the budget we have, and we have a pay-go budget. We are not adding anything new this year. We are severely constraining spending to get out of the deficit hole. I want to compare this bill, what we have done on a bipartisan basis—this appropriations bill passed our committee 26 to 3, strong bipartisan support in the subcommittee and full committee—with the President's budget so that Senators who are thinking of how they are going to vote on this appropriations bill might have a clearer picture. What would happen if we did what the President asked, if we just approved the President's budget instead of the bill before us? What I want to do is go through it.

You can tell a lot about a person's priorities on how they spend their money. This bill provides a modest increase in programs that help people, especially Americans at the bottom rungs of the ladder. It helps them to lead meaningful, safe, and productive lives. The President wants to cut those programs. He says we are spending too much for education, for medical research, for job training. Again, look at the amount of money we are talking about. The Senate bill is about \$11 billion higher than the President's budget. That is about 1 month in Iraq; we are talking about a full year—1 month in Iraq versus 1 full year for education, health, job retraining, all the other items.

Compared to last year, our Senate bill invests \$7.3 billion more than last year on education, health, and labor programs. Again, as part of our balanced budget plan, we are within our budget constraints. The President's budget would cut \$3.5 billion from these programs from last year. At the same time, he wants to spend up to almost \$10 billion a month in Iraq.

Again, let's look at some of the programs we are talking about; for example, helping the poor. Two of the most important programs in the bill are the community services block grants and the social services block grants. States get to use these funds in a wide variety of ways to help some of our most disadvantaged citizens. The Senate bill provides \$2.4 billion for these two block grants. The President's budget requested a 50-percent cut in these two programs, a 50-percent cut from last year to \$1.2 billion. So again, when we are talking about programs that help lift people up, we are at \$2.4 billion; the President says he wants to cut it in half to \$1.2 billion. That is one clear difference in the President's budget and in what we offer.

Let's look at medical research. The Senate bill provides another \$1 billion for the National Institutes of Health. That is about a 3.5-percent increase, and that does not even keep up with biomedical inflation. Our bill would increase the number of new research grants by about 400. What does the President's budget do? It would cut NIH by \$279 million. That would slash the budget by 12 percent below where we were in 2003—going backward. It would cut the number of new research grants by 800. So the President's budget would cut the number of research grants by 800; our bill would increase it by 400. Members may choose which one they would rather have—the President's budget or the Senate bill.

Let's look at special education. Three decades ago, when we passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, we said to the States: Our goal is for the Federal Government to provide up to 40 percent of the additional cost of mainstreaming kids, getting kids into school rather than warehousing them in State institutions or not even giving them an education. We opened the door for kids with disabilities to go to school. But we said our goal was to get up to 40 percent of this additional cost. That was 30 years ago. What has happened? I can say that time after time we have had a number of votes on the Senate floor, usually a sense-of-the-Senate resolution saying that we have to put more money for special education, we have to get up to that 40 percent. The Senate bill increases the State grants by \$450 million to help them meet the needs of the additional cost of educating kids with disabilities. The President's budget slashes \$291 million from special education.

What is not on this chart is that is going backward. The high point we had was in 2006. In 2006, the Federal Government's percentage of the additional cost was about 18 percent. Last year, it went down to 17 percent. Under the President's budget, it would go to 16 percent. This means a lot to our local schools because if we don't put the money in, there is only one way they can get it, and that is usually through local property taxes which are unfair in most cases.

Again, what we are trying to do is to meet our goal, our obligation, what we said 30 years ago. We put in \$450 million, and the President wants to cut it by \$291 million.

Let's look at another program, Head Start, a popular program, one of the great society programs started by Lyndon Johnson. We always hear about how the Great Society failed. No, it didn't. I am sorry. It did not. Here is one of the great examples of the successes of the Great Society; that is, the Head Start Program. We have a lot of data over the years to show that kids who went through Head Start do better in elementary school, high school. They go on to lead healthier and more productive lives.

In our bill, we expand Head Start services with an increase of \$200 mil-

lion. The President's budget cuts Head Start by \$100 million, which would leave thousands of children behind. The President's budget would result in a cut of over 30,000 slots for children in Head Start Programs. Again, the President's budget goes backward. We are moving ahead.

Let's look at community health centers. One of the things I had always said is that I agreed with President Bush about his goal of having more community health centers built and having at least one community health center in every poor district. I thought that was a laudable goal. I have been supportive of that. Again, the Senate bill increases the Community Health Centers Program by \$250 million. The President neglects the uninsured, people with limited health care access. He just says: Keep it where it is, no increase whatsoever. Yet we know we need to not only open new community health centers—a lot of them are backed up. People want to open new ones, plus the ones that are open, because of the increased cost of health services. Medical devices, equipment, and all that have higher expenditures as well. We need to make sure we keep up with funding of community health centers that are open.

We are also expanding dental services. One of the most important parts of community health centers we have found in the last several years—maybe decade, decade and a half—is the importance of dental care for kids. We have begun to add more and more dental services to our community health centers, which has helped a lot of families who otherwise cannot afford dental care for their children. That requires some extra money as well. We have responded to that by putting in \$250 million. The President keeps it exactly where it is.

Ours would increase the Community Health Centers Program from \$1.99 billion to \$2.2 billion. The President says: Leave it where it is and leave a lot of low-income Americans who are uninsured without any access to community health centers.

Another provision in our bill is the home energy assistance program, otherwise known as LIHEAP, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. It is a very successful program. The Senate bill maintains funding. We should have had an increase, but we are in a budget crunch. We couldn't get an increase for it, but at least we held the line. We know energy costs are higher now than they have ever been. What does the President's budget do? It cuts LIHEAP by \$379 billion despite record-high energy prices. The President's budget would reduce the number of families receiving this assistance by 1.1 million. Again, these are the very low income, in many cases low-income elderly who we know are cutting back on their food, on medicine, and other things to be able to pay heating bills in the wintertime.

Another issue that is of importance to all of us is Social Security.

As I said earlier, we know—every Senator knows; and you can check with your State offices, and they will tell you—the caseload for people whose disability claims have not been acted on has a backlog of several months, a year, a year and a half, in trying to get their disability claims approved. Right now, it takes 1½ years—1½ years—to process a hearing request. In the year 2000, it was 200 days. It was 200 days, and now it is a year and a half. The disability claims backlog is about 660,000. That is about a 100,000 increase since 2006.

Recognizing this, we have put a \$426 million increase into Social Security for hiring more people, to accelerate the hearings decisions, and to try to reduce that disability backlog we have now of 660,000.

The President's budget only put in enough money—\$300 million—that would allow no hiring, despite the lowest staffing level since 1972. With the baby boom generation hitting the disability-prone years and closing in on retirement, the President's budget would add almost 100,000 disability claims to the backlog, so we have put in \$426 million to reduce that backlog.

Student aid, which is another big part of our bill: The gap between the cost of a 4-year public college and the maximum Pell grant has increased by over \$3,000 since 2002. We increased the amount of money for Pell grants to \$4,800 to help alleviate that problem. The President's budget falls short of that by almost \$300, bringing it to \$4,540—again, very short of the amount needed to offset the cost of higher tuition.

On competitiveness, there are 7 million unemployed and millions more not working and not looking, as employers move jobs overseas. They hire foreign workers to fill jobs. Well, the Senate bill provides \$4.8 billion for job training, and career and technical education programs to enhance the competitiveness of our workforce.

What does the President's budget do? It undermines U.S. competitiveness with a \$1 billion cut—a \$1 billion cut—in job training, a 50-percent cut in career and technical education programs. Almost 8 million high school and college students could see career and technical education courses disappear because of the President's cuts.

That is not all that is in our bill. There is more, but I thought this kind of highlights the difference between the President's budget and what we are trying to do in this bill, keeping in mind, again, that our bill is a little over \$7 billion more than last year—hardly an inflationary increase. We have kept within our budget, within our pay-go budget. Yet we have been able to get necessary increases, as I have outlined.

The President's budget basically says: No. Give me more money to spend in Iraq, to the tune of about \$12 billion a month. We are saying we only need \$11 billion for the entire year, for all the things I outlined.

I think the choice is clear. I think the choice was clear when we were in subcommittee. It passed our subcommittee unanimously. It passed the full Appropriations Committee, as I said, by a vote of 26 to 3. I think it is a good, bipartisan bill. I hope we can bring it to a close here in the next day or so.

I say to my fellow Senators, the floor is open if anyone has any amendments. As I said, I am not encouraging them, but I know there are some people who do have amendments, and I would hope they might come over and offer those amendments.

With that, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3333 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3325

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3333.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE], for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. CONRAD, proposes an amendment numbered 3333 to amendment No. 3325.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide additional funding for the telehealth activities of the Health Resources and Services Administration)

On page 79, between lines 4 and 5, insert the following:

SEC. ____ (a) In addition to any amounts appropriated or otherwise made available under this Act to the Health Resources and Services Administration to carry out programs and activities under the Health Care Safety Net Amendments of 2002 (Public Law 107-251) and the amendments made by such Act, and for other telehealth programs under section 330I of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c-14), there shall be made available an additional \$6,800,000, to (1) expand support for existing and new telehealth resource centers, including at least 1 resource center focusing on telehomecare; (2) support telehealth network grants, telehealth demonstrations, and telehomecare pilot projects; and (3) provide grants to carry out programs under which health licensing boards or various States cooperate to develop and implement policies that will reduce statutory and regulatory barriers to telehealth.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, amounts appropriated or otherwise made available under this Act for the administrative and related expenses for departmental management for the Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human

Services, and the Department of Education, shall be reduced on a pro rata basis by \$6,800,000.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today to offer an amendment to provide an increase in funding for the Office for the Advancement of Telehealth, under the Health Resources and Services Administration. I am pleased to say I am joined in this effort by Senators Stabenow, Crapo, and Conrad.

I have spent quite a lot of time over the last month debating how to increase access to affordable health care in this country. Opinions have ranged considerably on this topic, but for most of us the goal is the same—it is to find ways at the Federal level to make health care more affordable for our constituents back home. Many of us are also trying to bring more options to rural areas or even urban underserved areas where access to care can be challenging.

One thing that both sides of the aisle can agree on and have agreed on during my time here is on a very similar amendment, and that is increasing funding for proven technologies such as telehealth.

Telehealth is the most effective way to deliver many types of care to rural and other populations that have traditionally lacked adequate health care access. Many Americans do not live near certain specialists or they don't live near affordable specialists. This is certainly the case among many small towns in my State of South Dakota.

Telehealth bridges the gap between these patients and providers by enabling doctors and nurses to remotely care for patients, thereby raising the standards of care for underserved populations. Telehealth also increases patient and provider access to medical information and improves training of health care providers. Of course, with increased access to care and less need to travel great distances, patients and providers save money.

I wish to share with my colleagues part of a story from an article in the Platte Enterprise, a local South Dakota newspaper, and a subsequent letter to the editor back in September dealing with telehealth. There are many different medical services that can be provided over long distances through telehealth technology. The Platte Health Center in Platte, SD, already provides some medical specialties through telemedicine, including dermatology and infectious disease. Now they will also be able to provide mental health services.

According to the article: Patients can talk to and see a physician on the television screen who in turn can see and talk to them.

In a subsequent letter to the editor from a user of these types of telemedicine services, my constituent, Kris Kuipers, describes:

I recently experienced the use of telemedicine at Platte Health Center Hospital. I thought it was wonderful. One of our local nurses greeted me and explained the operating equipment. It is great because I didn't have to do a thing.

I was able to talk with my physician in Sioux Falls who was on the TV screen just like if I were talking to Dr. Jerome Bentz. It was very personable and I didn't have to drive four hours round trip.

I am very excited that we have this capability here in town and I hope more physicians will catch on to the advantages of using the telemedicine network equipment. I want to encourage you to tell your out-of-town doctors about our tele-med capabilities at the Platte Health Center Hospital. Maybe by word of mouth, other physicians will be encouraged to use this local alternative as a means of providing health care to our rural communities.

I hear from local providers and patients such as Kris Kuipers very often about the benefits of telehealth to rural communities in my State. In South Dakota, telehealth technologies are utilized by our three major hospital networks: Avera, Sanford, and Rapid City Regional. Additionally, many of the rural health clinics who serve the health care needs of some of the smallest communities in our State also utilize these technologies. These organizations touch more than 40 different communities, large and small across the State.

The Office for the Advancement of Telehealth under HRSA is the primary tool of the Federal Government to develop telehealth resources and to help local providers to develop these resources.

My amendment will provide additional funding to support existing and new telehealth resource centers, including a resource center focused specifically on telehomecare; that is, telemonitoring technologies for patients who have to have their vital signs checked in the home. These resource centers currently help assist the telehealth community in breaking down barriers to the adoption of telehealth.

Additional funding will also support telehealth network grants, pilot projects for the development of telehomecare technologies and grants to help carry out programs where health licensing boards and States come together to reduce their statutory and regulatory barriers to telehealth.

My amendment is very modest. It proposes a \$6.8 million increase for the Office of the Advancement of Telehealth, or OAT, to fulfill these activities which were authorized under the Health Care Safety Net Amendments Act of 2002. With this amendment, total funding for OAT would be increased to \$13.8 million.

Additionally, this amount is fully offset by a prorated reduction in the departmental management accounts of the Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Education.

The \$6.8 million provided by my amendment, while modest, will have a significant and positive impact on almost every health activity in this wide-reaching bill. Increasing the investment in telehealth is valuable and necessary and will help save money for patients and for the Federal Government.

This is a small but important investment in the future of our Nation's health care system. I hope the \$6.8 million increase, when you take it away from all of the various departments that are funded under this bill—this is a multibillion dollar bill—is inconsequential in terms of the impact that can be had by putting that \$6.8 million into the advancement of telehealth in this country, making sure that more patients and more providers are able to utilize technology to meet the health care needs of people in rural and underserved areas across this country.

So I hope my colleagues will support this amendment and help us advance this very important initiative.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time, and I ask that the amendment be set aside.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PRYOR). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from South Dakota for bringing up this important program. As a neighboring State Senator, telehealth is a very important part of our State. We have seen the savings, as the Senator talked about, that can accrue from this, not only in terms of money but in saving the lives of people who live in our small towns and communities.

I have seen firsthand the benefit of telehealth by using the fiberoptic network system we have in the State of Iowa. I know of many cases where someone was in a car wreck in a small town and they didn't know whether they could leave them there in the small clinic or if they needed to be airlifted, and with telehealth and with the fiberoptic system, they were able to do some diagnoses and make the decision that, yes, the person needed to be removed immediately or, no, they didn't. So it does save a lot of money, but it also saves a lot of lives.

Again, I say to my friend from South Dakota, this program is a perfect example of how starved we have been in our account over the last few years—how starved we are in this bill. Ten years ago, telehealth received \$15.8 million in this bill. Over the last 5 years, the funding has hovered between \$4 million and \$6.8 million. So again, I have no problems with the amendment. I hope our staffs can work together and we can work together to find an appropriate offset. I think there may be some things we can work out that will be acceptable to both sides on the offset.

So I thank the Senator from South Dakota for his interest and for offering this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota is recognized.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I appreciate the willingness of the chairman of the subcommittee and the ranking member to work with us on this amendment. I know of his interest in this particular area of technology of health care, and I appreciate the support. Hopefully, we can figure out a way to get more money into this very important account because it does they are doing some remarkable things, and particularly in the areas the Senator from Iowa and I represent, in the rural areas of the country, and the sky is the limit in terms of what I think can be accomplished. But we have to make sure it is appropriately funded. So I thank the Senator from Iowa for being willing to help out.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3325

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. DORGAN] proposes an amendment numbered 3345 to amendment No. 3325.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require that the Secretary of Labor report to Congress regarding jobs lost and created as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and for other purposes)

On page 12, line 8, before the period, insert the following: "*Provided further*, That not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall submit to Congress a report regarding the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (in this section, referred to as the 'Agreement') on jobs in the United States. The report shall cover the period beginning on the date the Agreement entered into force with respect to the United States through December 31, 2007, and shall include on a industry-by-industry basis, the information regarding the number and type of jobs lost in the United States as a result of the agreement and the number and type of jobs created as a result of the Agreement."

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I offer this amendment on behalf of myself, Senator BROWN, Senator STABENOW, and Senator CASEY.

Mr. President, this amendment calls for a study and a report, and I want to describe the purpose of it and why I am offering it today. It requires the Department of Labor to determine in a study and report to the Congress the number of jobs lost to the North American Free Trade Agreement and the number of jobs created due to the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Now, it is interesting. In an October 4 Wall Street Journal article, there was a story, front page, with the headline "Republicans Grow Skeptical of Free Trade." Republicans grow skeptical of free trade. Actually, the story described skepticism by everybody about what is called free trade, but it was talking about the politics of it, and so the story described a poll which found that by a 2-to-1 margin Republican voters believed free trade deals have been bad for this country's economy. It turns out that the dissatisfaction with the current trade strategy is bipartisan, not just Republican.

The poll found that 59 percent of polled Republican voters agreed with this statement: Foreign trade has been bad for the U.S. economy because imports from abroad have reduced demand for American-made goods and it has cost jobs here at home and produced potentially unsafe products.

The poll also describes that all voters essentially feel this way; it is not just Republican voters. But as I indicated, it was trying to take a political look at an issue that is very important.

We are going to have a number of free trade agreements come to the floor of the Senate soon. We will have one from Peru, Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. It is interesting that the Wall Street Journal describes how the American people feel about these trade agreements. I think it is not the case that people feel trade is not important. I believe in trade, and plenty of it. I just insist that trade be fair.

I want to go back with this amendment to the North American Free Trade Agreement because that free trade agreement dates back almost—well, it is over a decade now, and we have had substantial experience with it. Those who negotiated it—and, incidentally, it was negotiated beginning under the first President Bush, concluding under President Clinton. He sent it to this Senate, and I, at that point, was one of the leaders waging a fight against it. But when it was debated in Congress, it was alleged by economists and virtually everybody that it would result in the creation of 200,000 new jobs for our country. If we would pass this new trade agreement, 200,000 jobs would be created in our country.

Well, what has happened with the trade agreement? Let me describe what has happened, and I will describe it in a way that the administration and the Commerce Department and Labor Department would describe it. They would say what an unbelievable success

this trade agreement has been. How on Earth would you be critical of a trade agreement that has increased our exports from the United States to Mexico? It has increased our exports to Mexico. And it has. It sure has. But it has increased our imports from Mexico much, much, much more. What started prior to the North American Free Trade Agreement as a \$1.5 billion surplus with Mexico—a trade surplus with Mexico—has now become nearly a \$60 billion, close to \$70 billion trade deficit. So it's a trade surplus converted to a big trade deficit.

Now, I didn't take a lot of higher math, but I understand if you turn a trade surplus into a big trade deficit, that is not a positive outcome for your country. That is a negative approach, and it means lost jobs. It means you are going to have to repay that trade debt with a lower standard of living someday.

In fact, the proponents of NAFTA some years ago relied on a study by Gary Clyde Hufbauer and Jeffrey Schott. It was called the Hufbauer/Schott, and it was the one cited by everybody. They actually said it is going to create 170,000 new jobs in our country—net new jobs. That was rounded up by the proponents to 200,000. That was going to be nirvana. We would pass this trade agreement and get 200,000 net new jobs. That was how it would work. Except that we passed it and we went from a \$1.5 billion trade surplus with Mexico to a nearly \$70 billion trade deficit. Now, that is headed in the wrong direction, and that means lost jobs.

I took a look at this, and I asked some while ago, 10 years after NAFTA had been approved, to commission a study from the Congressional Research Service to identify the top 100 American companies that had laid off U.S. workers as a result of NAFTA between 1994 and 2002, and here is the list of the top 100 companies. The list totals about 412,000 U.S. jobs that have been certified as lost. Now, this is not some speculation. This is a program at the Department of Labor that a company has to actually certify to in order to get some help for their employees—trade adjustment assistance. They certify that because of NAFTA these jobs are gone.

The Congressional Research Service turned to the Department of Labor, which has this program, and they said: Can you give us this information? They gave us the information. This means we can directly attribute these job losses to NAFTA, because that is the certification. Of the roughly 412,000 jobs that have been certified, actually of the top 100 companies, 201,000 jobs are attributable to these 100 names.

But if you look at the companies, it is very interesting. Levi Strauss is No. 2. Levi Strauss. I mean, you know, slip on a pair of Levis. Anything more all American than putting on a pair of Levis? There is not one pair of Levis made in the United States of America, not one. We passed NAFTA and Levis

go south. We still wear them, all right. They are just shipped north so we can slip them on. So Levi Strauss: 15,676 people, some were proud, I bet, going to work in the morning to make a pair of Levis. But no more. I understand there is not one pair of Levis made in America.

Kraft Foods. Kraft Foods is on the list. Kraft Foods decided they were going to shut down their cookie plant in Fair Lawn, NJ. They made Fig Newton cookies. So they moved Fig Newton cookies to Monterrey, Mexico, and 955 jobs were certified as lost. Fig Newton. Now, I don't know whether there is some inherent capability in Mexico to shovel fig paste in a more expeditious manner than exists in New Jersey. I doubt it. My guess is, just as Levi went south in search of cheap labor, so too did Fig Newton cookies.

So the next time somebody says let's go out and buy some Mexican food, buy Fig Newton cookies. They left New Jersey and ended up in Monterrey, Mexico. Mexican food.

What about Fruit of the Loom underwear? We all understand it; some wear it. Fruit of the Loom underwear—5,352 workers in Texas were certified and thousands more in Louisiana were certified to the Labor Department as having lost their jobs due to NAFTA. Actually, when that happened it was pretty big news around the country, because Fruit of the Loom laid off a lot of people, and I came to the floor and said: It is one thing to lose your shirt—and then I stopped, because I realized we shouldn't joke about jobs lost with Fruit of the Loom.

But these were people who made underwear—probably, I am sure, very proud of their jobs. They probably worked for a career. Is there no market for underwear any more? People stopped wearing them? I don't think so. The underwear is made, it is just not made in America. Fruit of the Loom is gone, and it was certified to have gone and the jobs are lost.

Mattel's western Kentucky plant, making Barbie playhouses and battery-powered pickup trucks for nearly 30 years, 980 employees went from a job in Kentucky to being unemployed. The plant went to Mexico to produce Mattel toys.

John Deere, 1150 employees, lawn mowers and chain saws, jobs gone to Mexico.

Well, all of these are just numbers. You know, you could pick any one of them. Nokia, 1,980. Make it 1,979 and talk about the person, the one person who came home one night and said: Honey, I lost my job. They called me in and they told me my job was gone. Well, was it because you weren't a good employee? No, I am a good employee. They just said we are moving the jobs to Mexico.

I have described other cases on the floor of the Senate of American workers who worked for careers and were making \$11 an hour plus benefits. They all got fired in search of cheaper labor

by a company that moved their jobs. In that case, the jobs went to China. But the reason I told the story previously is that all of those workers who lost their jobs because they made \$11 an hour—and that was way too much money—on the last day of work, as they pulled out of their driving spaces in the parking lot where their car used to park at a job they cared about, they all left a pair of empty shoes. It was a plaintive way for the employees of that company to send a message to the owners of that company who shipped their jobs overseas. It was a way of saying: You can move our jobs to China, but, by God, you are not going to fill our shoes. It was a message from the employees who cared about their jobs and cared about their work.

Well, Hufbauer/Schott and all the others who gave us those hifalutin estimates of new jobs with NAFTA, they said: By the way, there will be some jobs that will move south. But they will be low-skilled, low-wage jobs. But don't worry.

Well, guess what. The three largest imports to the United States today from Mexico are automobiles, automobile parts, and electronics, all the product of high-skilled jobs. Now, that is completely at odds with what was represented to the Congress and the American people.

I started this by saying the Wall Street Journal does a front-page feature story saying that Republicans don't believe free trade has been good for our country. They were doing a political story. But they needn't have said Republicans. Actually, the American people don't believe the so-called free trade agreements have been good for our country. Why is that? Because they are the ones who know. They are the ones who know, not the economists, not the folks who put on three-piece blue suits and suspenders every day and puff about what is going on in the world. It is the people who are working who lose their jobs and are facing downward pressure on income from these kinds of trade agreements.

Now, I am not suggesting, and would not ever suggest, that we shouldn't trade. I believe we ought to trade. I believe trade is important, and plenty of it. I just insist that it be fair. Whether it is Mexico, or China—the bilateral agreement with China—or South Korea or any number of trade agreements, I can point to the examples of what has happened that undermines the support of the American people for these agreements. Let me give you a couple.

South Korea. There is an agreement coming to the Senate Chamber dealing with South Korea. We have done other trade agreements with South Korea, and they have never met the commitments they made in those agreements, but nonetheless, an agreement with South Korea. Well, South Korea last year sent us roughly 700,000 automobiles. They put them on ships, sailed them across the ocean, and they offloaded them onto American docks

and put them for sale in this country. We were able to sell about 5,000 vehicles in South Korea.

So 700,000 one way, 5,000 the other way. Why? Is that consumer preference? It is because in Korea 99 percent of the cars on Korean roads are made in Korea, and that is the way they want it. They do not want American cars sold in Korea. They have all kinds of devices to keep them out. We open our market. One-way trade. The American people understand that, and they do not support that.

I am going to mention one other thing. I have mentioned the bilateral agreement with China, with whom we have a giant trade deficit—\$230 billion a year trade deficit. Not many people know that in the latest bilateral agreement with China—a country that is ramping up a very significant powerful automobile export industry. You will see Chinese cars on the streets in this country soon. They are aggressively ramping up an automobile export industry. Here is what our country decided to do with a country with which we have a very large deficit. We said to China: When you export your cars to the United States, we will impose a 2.5 percent tariff on cars you sell here, and it is okay for you, on any American cars we sell in China, to impose a tariff 10 times higher, at 25 percent. That is what we said to China.

That is unbelievably ignorant of our own economic interests. Is it surprising the Wall Street Journal does a poll that says the American people don't believe in this nonsense? They are living it. They lose their jobs. There is not one person in the Congress who has lost his or her job due to a bad trade agreement. It is the other folks out there who go to work in the morning and care about their job, who are doing the best they can and are told, by the way, you have to compete with Monterrey, or Chihuahua, or someone in Shenzhen, or Beijing who is willing to work for 30 cents an hour. And if you can't compete with them, we are sorry.

The result has been downward pressure on wages, fewer benefits, and problems for American workers. That is a very long description of why I wanted to offer an amendment. Finally, at long last, I wish to see a real evaluation done of what has been the net result of NAFTA, because we still have these folks running around here saying NAFTA has been a great success. I mean, I don't know if they are on their feet when they look at something and say it is successful or not, but you cannot take a sober look at this and say it is successful. Exports have grown, yes, but imports have grown much faster. The evidence is here. We have roughly 412,000 jobs that have been certified as having been lost to Mexico, certified by the Department of Labor as having been lost, because of the trade agreement—or at least been lost from the time the trade agreement was negotiated.

What I have asked for is a study, a real study to determine the number

and types of jobs lost due to NAFTA and the number and types of jobs created due to NAFTA.

One final point. This administration has no problem figuring out how great trade deals will be for other countries. In fact, Wendy Cutler, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative, was touting the benefits that our trade agreement with Korea would offer to Korea. Let me quote her:

An FTA with the United States is predicted to produce economic benefits for the Korean economy, increasing Korea's real GDP by as much as 2 percent, establishing a foundation to achieve per capita income to as high as \$30,000, boosting exports to the United States by 15 percent, and creating 100,000 new jobs.

That is what the USTR is saying, here is the nirvana that is going to exist if we can simply do this trade agreement: Here is what is going to exist for Korea.

Ask them, what will exist for our country? What will be the consequences for our country? What are the comparable numbers for the United States? They make no similar projection.

In fact, the Korean agreement comes to us now, not having addressed the issue of the imbalance in the bilateral automobile trade with Korea.

Anyway, it is a case where I hope, perhaps, repetition will someday breed success. It is a case where I believe we should trade. I believe our country should be a leader in trade. I believe our leadership ought to say we aspire to lift others up in the world, not push our workers down. We spent 100 years creating standards—safe workplace, child labor law, minimum wage, a whole series of standards that we ought to be proud of.

I believe in our trade agreements we ought to aspire to lift others up rather than push ourselves down, push our standards down. That has regrettably not been the case with NAFTA. It has not been the case with a number of other trade agreements and will likely not be the case with the next four agreements that will be brought to the Senate.

My colleagues and I, several of us, will be proposing establishing benchmarks and accountability at long last attached to trade agreements. We ought to have benchmarks and some accountability attached to those benchmarks to find out what has happened. You can't go on forever with a bad trade agreement. You can't go on forever with one that doesn't work. When we are awash in debt, as we are, over \$700 billion a year in trade deficit—which inevitably will be repaid with a lower standard of living in the United States—then we are headed for trouble. We need a better trade strategy, one that encourages trade but one that demands and insists on fair trade for our own economic interests.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator DORGAN for his many years

championing the cause of our skilled workers in this country, championing the cause of manufacturing in this country. He warned us a long time ago about what NAFTA was going to do. Frankly, his dire predictions have turned out, unfortunately, to be true. When Senator DORGAN speaks about NAFTA, or any trade agreement, and the impact on jobs in this country, it would do us well to pay attention.

There is no one I know who knows more about this area than Senator DORGAN. His amendment, I say to him, is one I can fully support. I hope all Members of the Senate could support it. As he said, it requires the Department of Labor to provide Congress with a fuller picture of the impact of the NAFTA agreement.

Frankly, this is key information we ought to have anyway so we can understand the changes to our economy that have occurred since NAFTA has passed. Again, I thank him for it. This has been a key issue in my State of Iowa.

I say to my friend from North Dakota, I remember all the speeches he used to give about Huffy bicycles and now talking about Levis. What could be more American than that?

I might say something equally as American as that is the Maytag washing machine. The Maytag washing machine, what could be more American than that Maytag repairman who never had anything to do because the Maytag washers and dryers were so good?

We have always taken great pride in Iowa that Iowa was the home of the Maytag, has been since the beginning, since Fred Maytag started his business in Newton, IA. I hate to tell you, but your Maytag washers are now coming from Mexico. All these great jobs we had, and these were good-paying jobs. A lot of people in the past worked at Maytag. It was part of their community. They built good schools, educated their kids, the kids went on. Some of the kids grew up and they then went to work at Maytag. It was a wonderful community, a wonderful business. They had great relations with organized labor there.

To make a long story short, Whirlpool came in, bought out Maytag, shipped all the jobs to Mexico. Now all those jobs are missing in Iowa. What do we do? We scramble to get some retraining, some job retraining and things such as that. But the jobs the people are getting are much lower paid jobs. They are not as good, and all the manufacturing jobs are now in Mexico.

Of course, maybe I am being a little chauvinistic because it was such an Iowa institution, Maytag, and to think they are not making them there anymore, they are gone.

Mr. DORGAN. The town of Bryan, OH, was enormously proud of its product. It was the product that defined Bryan, OH. It was Etch A Sketch; every little kid played with Etch A Sketch. The folks in Bryan, OH, made Etch A Sketch and every kid played with them. Etch A Sketch is gone.

They couldn't compete with China. And the Radio Flyer Little Red Wagon was made in Chicago for 110 years. It was made by an immigrant who started the company. Why was it called Radio Flyer, the Little Red Wagon? This immigrant was fascinated with two things. He liked Marconi, so he named it Radio, and he loved airplanes. So he decided to name it, the Little Red Wagon he crafted in Chicago, IL, as Radio Flyer, and virtually every kid in this country has ridden on Radio Flyer wagons.

Mr. HARKIN. I did myself when I was a kid.

Mr. DORGAN. They were here for 110 years but no more. Now they are made in China. We could go on at some length. Some people will say: Don't you understand, you two, the world has changed, for God's sake, the world has changed and they are going to make these things where you can pay 20 or 30 cents an hour.

My question to them is this: If that is where the jobs are, who is going to buy the products? In this country, it seems we built standards for a century to provide good wages and working conditions for the American worker and that is what provided the income and development and expansion of the middle class and gave them the earning power to buy products. I know the Senator agrees with me. He agrees with trade.

We come from agricultural States. We need to find a foreign market for what we produce, but trade has to be fair.

Mr. HARKIN. We represent agricultural States, but we always had a good blend of manufacturing and agriculture. One of the well-kept secrets is that Iowa at one time had more foundries than any other State in the Nation, small foundries. People made things in these foundries. Those jobs have left now. Now with Maytag leaving, it is eroding our manufacturing base.

We need a good industrial policy. We need a manufacturing policy for this country. We don't have one. We need a good industrial policy for this country. We don't have one. If we do not have some kind of an industrial policy and some policy that says here is the kind of manufacturing base we are going to keep, we are going to protect—protect? I don't mind using the word "protect." We are protecting our people. If we are going to have a manufacturing base that protects us in the area of national security, so we have the manufacturing wherewithal to take the raw materials and make them into items that our people need but which will provide us with that bulwark for the future against the possibility of other countries cutting us off or making trade sanctions against us—we need to have that policy.

We don't have it. If we don't have it pretty soon, we are not going to be making anything in this country. We are not going to be making anything. We are going to be shuffling money

around, that is all we are going to be doing. That is not what makes a great country, and it is not what is going to sustain us, if all we are going to do is shuffle money around.

I thank the Senator. He has been a great leader in this area. We are going to do something. We don't have an agreement yet to accept it. I can tell the Senator I am going to work hard to make sure we get an acceptance of his amendment. I thank him for it.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CANTWELL). The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3347 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3325

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendments so I can offer an amendment that has been sent to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Jersey [Mr. MENENDEZ] proposes an amendment numbered 3347 to amendment No. 3325.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide funding for the activities under the Patient Navigator Outreach and Chronic Disease Prevention Act of 2005)

On page 79, between lines 4 and 5, insert the following:

SEC. ____ (a) In addition to any other amounts appropriated or otherwise made available under this Act, \$15,000,000 shall be available to carry out activities under the Patient Navigator Outreach and Chronic Disease Prevention Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-18).

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the amount made available under this Act for the Reading First State Grants program under subpart 1 of part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6361 et seq.), as specified in the committee report of the Senate accompanying this Act, shall be reduced by \$15,000,000.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, first I wish to thank Senator HARKIN for his leadership on this bill, as well as the ranking Republican, and his strong support of what I am trying to do here, which is to fund the Patient Navigator Program.

The amendment provides \$15 million for initial implementation of the Patient Navigator Outreach and Chronic Disease Prevention Act of 2005. This

act creates a 5-year, \$25 million demonstration program within the Health Resources and Services Administration for patient navigator services through community health centers, National Cancer Institute centers, Indian Health Service centers, and rural health clinics, as well as hospitals, academic health centers, and certain nonprofit entities that enter into partnerships to provide patient navigator services.

This funding is the culmination of years of bipartisan and bicameral compromise. I was then, at the time, in the House of Representatives, a sponsor with Congresswoman DEBORAH PRYCE from Ohio. Here in the Senate, Senators HUTCHISON and BINGAMAN were champions of this legislation. It passed by unanimous consent in the Senate, and President Bush signed it into law in 2005. The Labor-HHS Subcommittee provided funding last year, but unfortunately that did not make it into the final bill.

This Patient Navigator and Chronic Disease Prevention Act and the patient navigators that are called for in the bill have strong grassroots support from organizations such as the American Cancer Society. Actually, it was our work with the American Cancer Society that at the time had it as its No. 1 or No. 2 top legislative initiative. So we got the bill passed into law, but we haven't been able to fund it yet. It also has the support of the National Association of Community Health Centers, the National Rural Health Association, the American Diabetes Association, the American Medical Association, the Intercultural Cancer Council, the National Alliance for Hispanic Health, the National Hispanic Medical Association, the National Patient Advocate Foundation, and many others.

The goal of a patient navigator is to improve health outcomes by helping patients, including patients in underserved communities, to overcome barriers they face in getting early screening and appropriate followup treatment.

Patient navigators benefit people across the country, from all walks of life, regardless of class, location, culture, or language, and navigators help get people into a health care provider for preventive screenings and help them navigate our complex health care system if an abnormality is detected. They conduct year-round outreach into underserved communities so people are aware of the importance of early detection and screening. They help them find followup testing and treatment. They stay with them throughout the process to make sure they get to that next doctor's appointment and they get early treatment. This is a small investment with huge benefits, benefits in terms of lives and dollars saved.

I was fortunate enough, in the House of Representatives, when I served there, to actually get some pilot projects of patient navigators in what was my former congressional district in New Jersey. It replicated two very

successful programs that were the fore-runners of this idea—Dr. Harold Freeman in Harlem Hospital, who works with the American Cancer Society, and here in Washington, DC, at the Washington Cancer Center, Dr. Elmer Huerta, who had a different variation on it, but both of them created patient navigation, the effort to bring individuals into a preventive setting, and in doing so, help them navigate. We took that example and we brought it to my home State of New Jersey.

What we did is, at one of the family health centers, we found ourselves significantly bringing in people into a preventive setting. We found a fair number of individuals who had abnormalities, and because of the screening we put them through, we detected their abnormalities. Then, through the patient navigator, we navigated them through the health care system in a way that we saved lives and we saved an enormous amount of money from people whom we caught early in their illness, particularly cancer-related, and whom we ultimately were able to not only save their lives but at an enormous cost of having individuals not wait longer in the process and end up, at the end of the day, in an emergency room with far greater costs.

So this is a small investment with huge benefits, benefits in terms of lives and dollars saved. By getting people in to see a doctor before symptoms develop, we can catch diseases such as cancer or diabetes early. Then we can get patients into treatment early, which means they will have a better chance of survival, and the health care costs will be lower.

This is a win-win proposition which has strong bipartisan support in the House and Senate, signed by the President. We are just simply looking to get it funded. We look forward to working with the chair of the subcommittee, Senator HARKIN, and the ranking member to get it accepted. We think we have an appropriate offset, but at the same time, we are open to others as well in order to achieve this goal.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, on October 11, we marked the fifth anniversary of Congress's capitulation to the resolution authorizing the war in Iraq. I believe we should take this opportunity to tally up what this war has cost our Nation.

We are all very aware of the human cost. More Americans have died in Iraq than died on September 11. These are our friends and neighbors, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, gone forever. Twenty-eight thousand men and women have come back home wounded, some with their legs or arms blown off by bombs, some blind from shrapnel in their eyes, some thrown into a state of mental shock from which they will never fully recover.

As for the Iraqi men, women, and children who have died in this conflict, we cannot even say. Some estimates say the body count is more than 100,000. As for the people who have been forced to abandon their homes, they are about to number 4½ million, a disproportionate number of them being children.

We all know that the Iraq war is a human calamity of vast proportions. It can be harder to visualize the direct damage that comes from the financial cost of the war, to see it as the cancer that it is, making our debt metastasize, threatening our budget, eating away at the financial stability of our entire Nation.

We are paying for this war with borrowed money, racking up massive debt, severely threatening the future of our country. We know our country has spent more than \$450 billion on this war so far. We continue to spend about \$10 billion every month. That does not just add up to a stack of bills that could have sat in the Treasury; it is equipment at ports that can scan for nuclear weapons and other measures that actually make the homeland more secure. It is children healed with better health care. It is more teachers in our schools, better training for our jobs, energy that is clean and does not strengthen repressive regimes in the Middle East, payment of our debts so future generations will inherit a country that is financially viable. Those are casualties we cannot fail to count.

When our money gets burned in Iraq, we deserve to know what we are trading away. What we are trading away cannot be summed up in one speech, however, so I will be coming back to the subject as many times as necessary to give each sacrifice fair attention.

When we add it all up, the bottom line is very clear: If we had never gone into Iraq, our lives would be better. The sooner we get out of Iraq, the better our lives will be. I will repeat this until our troops have come home. If we had never gone into Iraq, our lives would be better, and the sooner we transition out of Iraq, the better our lives will be.

Today, I wish to speak about what the failed war in Iraq has cost us in terms of our security here at home. The Bush administration likes to parrot the line that:

We are fighting them over there, so we do not have to fight them here.

Nevermind that the war has created more terrorists than there were before. Beyond that, it has directed funding away from programs that actually would prevent terrorists from attacking the homeland. The administration's budget for the failed war in Iraq is 13 times this year's budget for Homeland Security—13 times this year's budget for Homeland Security. Do we really think the Iraq war is 13 times more important to America than the Department of Homeland Security's mission? When it comes to our money, the administration's motto really is:

We are spending it over there, so we do not have to spend it here.

Every time we ride the subway or the bus, we put ourselves at risk because our public transportation systems are unnecessarily vulnerable to terrorist attacks. The American Public Transportation Association estimates that it will cost \$6 billion to make them substantially more secure. That includes funding for personnel, training, communications systems, cameras, detection systems. Well, we spend that much—that is, \$6 billion that the Public Transportation Association says would make us safer—we spend that much in Iraq every 18 days. Every 18 days. That is what the war costs. Security on public transportation versus 18 days in Iraq—what is our choice?

Money being spent in Iraq could have substantially improved security in our Nation's ports, where 95 percent of the cargo slips into the country without any inspection whatsoever. For the cost of 3 days of operations in Iraq, we could fund a year's worth, a year's worth of strong port security initiatives throughout our country—purchasing radiation detectors, giving individual grants tailored to the specific needs of each port, and drastically increasing the number of containers screened.

Here is an example. There is something called a container security device. It attaches to the hinges of a container and lets inspectors at ports know if the container has been tampered with from the port it came from. They cost about \$25 each. You could provide a device for every one of the 11 million-plus containers that enter our ports every year for the same money it costs us to be in Iraq for 1 single day. We could take 11 million containers that enter our ports every year and for 1 single day in Iraq make our country more secure. That is what the war costs—electronic security for every container entering the United States versus 1 day in Iraq.

As we have considered the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill that we passed yesterday, it is as good a time as any to discuss how funding for the Iraq war impacts local police departments here at home. With the billions of dollars going toward a failed effort to secure the streets of Baghdad, we could boost our efforts to fight terror and violence of gangs on the streets of the neighborhoods we call home.

The FBI tells us that crime rates are going up in the United States. This is no coincidence considering the Bush administration has repeatedly cut funding for hiring new police, law enforcement technology, and successful prevention programs.

Luckily, this Senate under Democratic leadership has changed that course. We are taking action to reverse that situation. I was proud to cosponsor Senator BIDEN's amendment to boost funding for the COPS Program, one of the most successful Federal

crime prevention programs in history. Eight hours of Iraq funding pays for that amendment to put community police officers on the streets of our Nation. That is the war cost—more police on the streets versus 8 hours of spending in Iraq. When it comes to our money, the message the administration is sending is clear. We are spending it over there so we don't spend it here. But in terms of security, if we had never gone into Iraq, our lives would be better. The sooner we transition out of Iraq, the better our lives will be.

Costs of the war for the United States are going only to escalate as Great Britain withdraws its troops. So the financial question we have to answer as a nation is as urgent as any we have ever faced. We have to decide what we value as a Nation: the war or keeping our country safe. These are the questions we are going to continue to ask to put a real sense of what it is costing us here at home in real terms. Today was about security. We will come back to the Senate floor and talk about education and health care and economic expansion and reducing debt, because we have to offer a real sense to the American people of what this war is costing us here at home.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

AMENDMENT NO. 3332 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3325

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment to be set aside.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Madam President, I call up amendment No. 3332.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Missouri [Mrs. MCCASKILL], for herself and Mr. DEMINT, proposes an amendment numbered 3332.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Departments to establish and maintain on their website home pages a direct link to the websites of their Inspectors General and for other purposes)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Departments, agencies, and commissions funded under this Act, shall establish and maintain on the homepages of their Internet websites—

- (1) a direct link to the Internet websites of their Offices of Inspectors General; and
- (2) a mechanism on the Offices of Inspectors General website by which individuals may anonymously report cases of waste, fraud, or abuse with respect to those Departments, agencies, and commissions.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. I ask unanimous consent to add Senator DEMINT as a cosponsor of the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Madam President, we have successfully added this amendment to all appropriations bills to date. It is a very simple amendment. It requires the Departments under this bill to maintain a direct link to the agency's inspector general Web site, on the home page of his or her department's Web site. It requires this direct link because the information the inspector general provides to the public needs to be easily available. They are the eyes and ears of the taxpayers in many ways. They are on the front lines in terms of waste, fraud, and abuse. They provide a valuable service. In many departments, one can't find the information. This amendment will require that on the home page of the Web sites of the Departments of Education, Labor Health and Human Services, there be a direct link to the inspector general of that Department's Web site so taxpayers, Members of Congress, and members of the executive branch can easily find the important information that is provided by the inspector general's office.

I urge passage of the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Missouri for offering this amendment. It is a good amendment. I have checked with Senator SPECTER on our side, and it is OK on that side. It is OK with us. We will accept the amendment.

Before doing so, I will again say to my friend from Missouri that in this bill we have increased funding above the President's budget for all the inspector generals in all the departments this bill covers. Basically opening it up, as her amendment does, allows more people access to what the inspector generals are doing. Hopefully we can continue to try to maintain the integrity and independence of the inspector generals. Some of them are perhaps being pressured by the administration to do certain things. But we want to maintain that integrity and the independence of the inspector generals. This amendment will help to do that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, without objection, the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 3332) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I rise to support the Dorgan amendment offered earlier this evening. I thank him for his amendment. I am a proud cosponsor.

The Dorgan amendment makes sense for a variety of reasons. Most importantly, we need updated and current information on what NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, which passed in November of 1993, means for our country today and, most importantly, because the North American Free Trade Agreement has become

the model, for good or bad, for trade policy since. The Central American Free Trade Agreement was built on the NAFTA model. Trade agreements Presidents asked this Congress to pass, negotiated with Peru and Colombia, Panama and South Korea, while tweaked, while having some improvements, perhaps, in the case of Peru and Panama, some significant improvements, nonetheless are based on the same failed trade model that NAFTA was based on, a trade model that entertains investor-state relations giving more authority to corporations to undercut environmental laws in our country, to undercut labor law, and to undercut the values of our society.

I wish President Bush would sit down with the steel worker in Steubenville or the machinist in Toledo or the tool and die shop owner in Lorain and talk about what these trade policies, this NAFTA model the Dorgan amendment addresses, in fact means for American workers, what they mean for American small manufacturers, what they mean for our communities, what they mean in Hamilton and Middletown and Ash-tabula and Maineville, what impact that has on communities. These trade policies, which are set in Washington and negotiated across the globe, have a direct impact on Toledo, on Wauseon, on Findlay, on Bowling Green, all across our State. That is why the voters in my State and across the country sent a message loudly and clearly in November demanding a very different direction in trade policy, a trade policy that serves workers, consumers, families, and communities rather than one that serves investors, especially the wealthy in other countries and the wealthy in this country.

Working men and women in Ohio, including the machine shop owner in Akron and the factory worker in Columbus, know that job loss doesn't just affect the worker or the worker's family or the business owner. Job loss in the thousands affects communities and police, the number of police and firefighters and teachers and workers in a community and the economic vitality of that community.

What we have seen in the last few years in this country is disturbing especially in this sense. American workers all across the board, whether they are in the State of the Presiding Officer, Washington, or in Lima, OH, are more productive; whether they work with their hands or minds or whether they are a retailer or whether they are a factory owner, workers are more productive, provably, quantifiably, quantitatively way more productive than they were 5 years ago. That is a testament to our Nation's hard-working and skilled labor force. It is a testament to our job training and education system. The problem is, those workers' productivity is no longer parallel to their wages. It used to be in this country, after the war, since the 1940s, that as productivity went up, workers' wages and profits went up roughly at the

same pace. But we have seen a disconnect. As productivity goes up and up because workers with their capital investments are more and more productive, we have not seen wages keep up. In a nutshell, that is because ultimately what has happened is, our Nation's workers don't share in the wealth they have created for their employers. If you are a worker and you create more wealth for your employer, you should share in the wealth. But that is not what is happening. That disconnect is more and more obvious in this country, especially in a State such as Ohio.

Some years after NAFTA passed the House and Senate and was signed into law, took effect, the agreement among Mexico and the United States and Canada, some 5 years later, at my own expense, I flew to McAllen, TX, rented a car with a couple friends, went across the border into Reynosa, Mexico. I wanted to see how NAFTA was working on the other side of the border. I knew how it was working in Lorain and Akron and Sandusky and Findlay, but I wanted to see how it worked on the other side of the border. I went to the home of two General Electric workers. They worked for GE Mexico. They lived in a 20-by-20-foot shack, dirt floors, no running water or electricity. When it rained hard, the dirt floors turned to mud. These were full-time workers, 3 miles from the United States of America, just south of the Rio Grande. These workers were working every bit as hard as any workers in the United States. But they weren't sharing in the wealth they created for their employers.

As you walked around their home, in the community behind their shack was a ditch maybe 4 feet wide, 2 by 4 across the ditch. This ditch was filled with I am not sure what, human/industrial effluent waste running through the neighborhood. The American Medical Association says along the Rio Grande River is one of most toxic places in the western hemisphere. There were children playing in the ditch contracting who knows what kind of diseases that they might pick up along this very polluted little waterway, if you could call it that. But as you walked around this neighborhood and you looked at these shacks, you could tell where the workers worked because the workers' shacks were constructed from the packing materials of the companies for which they worked. The roofs, the walls were made of cardboard boxes and other kinds of packing materials, crates where these workers worked.

Not far away from these shacks I visited an auto plant. This plant looked just like an auto plant in the United States. It was modern, maybe more modern, more up to date, the best technology. The workers were working hard. The floors were clean, all that you would want in a modern industrial plant. But there was one difference between the Mexican auto plant and an auto plant in Norwood or Toledo. The

auto plant in Mexico had no parking lot because the workers there weren't paid enough to buy the cars they made. They weren't sharing in the wealth they created. You could go halfway around the world to a Motorola plant in Malaysia, and workers weren't paid enough to buy the cell phones they make. You could come back to Costa Rica and go to a Disney plant, and the workers weren't making enough to buy toys for their children. You could go halfway around the world to China and go to a Nike plant or a bicycle plant, and the workers were not making enough to buy the Nikes or the bicycles they were making, that they were building. That is the key.

In our trade policy, which has become international in this globalized economy, because of what is happening around the world and because of the way we write trade policy, workers are simply not sharing in the wealth they create. Whether it is a Mexican auto plant, a Malaysian cell phone plant, a toy plant in Costa Rica, or a shoe plant in China, the workers are not making enough to share in the wealth. The workers are not sharing in the wealth they create. That is what has happened in our country, this disconnect between productivity and wages. More than anything, that is why the middle class is shrinking. That is why the Dorgan amendment is so important to show the world, to show the country, to show us in this body what we need to do to fix our trade policy.

This trade policy hurts local business owners, not just the plant that might lay off or close, but it hurts the drugstore, the grocery store, the neighborhood restaurant. It hurts teachers and firefighters and police. It hurts the people whom the police and the firefighters and the teachers serve. When I first ran for Congress, our trade deficit was \$38 billion. Today, after NAFTA and NAFTA clones, like the Central American Free Trade agreement, the WTO and PNTR with China, our trade deficit has topped \$800 billion, from \$38 billion in 1992 to \$800 billion today. Our trade deficit with China in 1992 was barely double digits, barely \$10 billion. Now it probably—for 2007, we don't know for sure—is going to exceed \$250 billion. The first President Bush said a \$1 billion trade surplus or deficit translates into 13,000 jobs. Whether he is right, he is close enough to be right. When you do the math, a \$1 billion trade surplus or trade deficit translates into 13,000 jobs. When you do the math, you can see the kind of effect our trade policy has on us, not just with lost jobs but with what it has done to break that connection between productivity and workers' wages.

That is the story of our trade policy and why the Dorgan amendment is so important. The current system is not sustainable. We want trade. We want plenty of trade but not under this NAFTA model. We want trade under a whole new set of rules. Now is not the time for more bad trade deals.

We need to adopt the Dorgan amendment, look at what has happened with our trade policy, pause, and have a national conversation about a new direction for trade in the 21st century.

Let's wait on the passage of Peru and Panama. Let's wait on the passage of South Korea and Colombia. We need a conversation that includes all parties involved. That means investors. It means workers. It means small business owners. It means communities with people who are so affected by trade. The Dorgan amendment is a significant first step in doing that.

We should adopt the Dorgan amendment. We should pause and look at where our trade policy is going, and then we should embark in a new direction on trade in this country.

FAMILY FORUM EARMARK

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I rise today to discuss a project I sponsored in the fiscal year 2008 Labor, Health, Human Services and Education appropriations bill. The project, which would develop a plan to promote better science-based education in Ouachita Parish by the Louisiana Family Forum, has raised concerns among some that its intention was to mandate and push creationism within the public schools. That is clearly not and never was the intent of the project, nor would it have been its effect. However, to avoid more hysterics, I would like to move the \$100,000 recommended for this project by the subcommittee when the bill goes to conference committee to another Louisiana priority project funded in this bill.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I appreciate the sentiments by the Senator from Louisiana and accept this proposal to move the funding for this project to other priority projects for the State of Louisiana in the bill when it goes to conference committee.

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I concur with my colleague and will agree to move these funds in conference committee.

Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, since the year 2000, shortly after news reports attributed hundreds of deaths to asbestos exposure from decades of vermiculite mining in Libby, MT, I have worked hard on behalf of the people there to ensure that they received the care they needed. The Center for Asbestos Related Disease plays an important role in screening Libby residents and providing them with the health care they need as a result of this tragedy.

The people living in Libby suffer asbestos-related diseases at a rate 40 to 60 times the national average. They suffer from mesothelioma at a rate 100 times the national average. The culprit for this unprecedented tragedy is a highly toxic tremolite asbestos amphibole. Due to the shipping of Libby asbestos to processing sites in 30 States, and its subsequent use as insulation material in all parts of the country, the toxicity of this amphibole is an issue of national importance.

The Department of Health and Human Services and the Environmental Protection Agency have designated the Center for Asbestos Related Disease as a clearinghouse for information that facilitates clinical epidemiological and pathologic studies of asbestos-related diseases. This new role unfortunately comes without adequate funding to accommodate the transition to this national leadership role.

This is an issue of national concern to scientists who rely on tremolite asbestos data for their work. Support letters have been sent to Members of this body by researchers at the Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation from California, Mount Sinai Medical School in New York, Wayne State University in Michigan, North Carolina State University, the University of Vermont, the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Pennsylvania, and Montana State University. These letters all emphasize the importance of the Libby data to the national research efforts on asbestos related disease.

That is why I submitted an amendment to the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2008. My amendment would provide \$250,000 to the Center for Asbestos Related Disease in Libby, MT, so that the clinic can provide its critically important information to clinical researchers and universities across the country. The raw data and data management that the center provides for research institutions will facilitate meaningful research into amphibole asbestos toxicity and health impacts.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ANNA POLITKOVSKAYA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, the Russian Federation is, in many respects, a democratic state. Elections are held at regular intervals, local and national elective bodies meet and pass legislation. Referenda may be held on major issues, both at the national and local level, although this exercise may be reduced in the near future.

But there is another consideration, in which the Russian Federation falls short in its democratic characterization.

Freedom of the press is vital to the existence of a stable democratic state. Journalists must be able to openly report on all issues without fear of physical harassment or economic pressures. It is no accident that Napoleon said that four newspapers were more effective than a thousand bayonets.

Therefore, it is regrettable that a number of Russian journalists have recently been murdered while reporting on subjects sensitive to the Russian government. Other have been beaten or otherwise prevented from doing their job. One recent victim was involuntarily incarcerated in a psychiatric hospital.

Among those Russian journalists who have given their lives for their profession was Anna Politkovskaya, who reported extensively on the brutal war in Russia's secessionist region of Chechnya. Last week, friends, colleagues, and supporters of this courageous woman marked the one-year anniversary of her assassination.

Politkovskaya was fearless in her efforts to bring correct and unbiased information on the Chechen war to her readers. This was a hard-earned counterpoint to the propaganda that much of the electronic media turned out daily on the conflict . . . when there was any mention of it at all. While other journalists reported on the conflict from afar, she routinely traveled to troublesome areas to view and describe first-hand the problems and issues in the war-torn region. She was one of few Russian reporters to actively engage the Chechen people in open dialogue, and she presented her findings in a fair and balanced manner. Her resume included a long list of awards and commendations for her investigative skills and professional competence.

On October 7th, 2006, Ms. Politkovskaya was carrying groceries up to her Moscow apartment when, according to authorities, a gunman clad in black fired twice, shooting her once in the head. The murderer left the weapon at her side, a brazen gesture indicating, or meant to indicate, the commission of a contract murder. The Moscow newspaper Novaya Gazeta, where Ms. Politkovskaya worked, suggested the assassin or assassins had been following her closely and probably for a long time. Indeed, she was used to being watched and harassed. Numerous threats had already been made on her life, and at one point in 2001 she was forced to flee to Vienna.

As Co-chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I would also note that Anna Politkovskaya delivered memorable and compelling testimony on the conflict in Chechnya at Commission hearings on Capitol Hill in September 2003, and she was awarded the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's annual Prize for Journalism and Democracy in that year.

Recently, several suspects were arrested in connection with the murder. However, there are disturbing reports that the investigation has been marked