

said, we maintain the equally vital and necessary role of the policy councils in setting program priorities, classroom activities, and personnel changes. We believe this careful balance will help ensure the continued integrity of the Head Start Program for years to come.

We recognize that a vast majority of the Head Start agencies provide high quality, comprehensive services for children in the Head Start Programs. However, the provisions in this bill will create an important incentive for programs to operate at their best and in the best interest of the children they serve.

I want to particularly note emphasis we have placed on the role of parents in Head Start Programs. It is vital to remember that this program provides services to children and their families. Parents provide valuable insight and experience as to what a Head Start Program should do for children. In fact, this legislation increases the presence of parents in Head Start Programs, strengthens services for families, and provides training and development opportunities for parents that do serve on the policy councils and governing bodies.

This legislation also increases the coordination, collaboration, and excellence of early childhood education and care programs. It enhances the role of the State director of Head Start collaboration to ensure that Head Start Programs are maximizing their potential by stretching dollars, promoting partnerships to meet State and local needs, and developing strategic plans to meet future and current goals. This legislation also allows each State to apply for funds to support a State advisory council on early care and education to conduct a statewide needs assessment, identify collaboration opportunities, and support additional data collection. Additional encouragement of coordination and collaboration will stretch Federal, State and local resources to provide additional resources to disadvantaged children across the country.

Finally, this legislation requires the Department of Health and Human Services to cease any further development or implementation of the National Reporting System. While I believe that the assessment of children in the Head Start Program is important, I believe that the assessment must be both age and developmentally appropriate. This legislation requires a review and update of the assessments, standards, and measures used in Head Start Programs by the Panel on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children of the National Academy of Sciences. Once the panel completes its recommendations, the Secretary is then allowed to revisit the issue of assessment in Head Start Programs.

The members of the HELP Committee, and in particular Senators ALEXANDER, KENNEDY, and DODD, have worked tirelessly on this legislation.

The final product before us today is a comprehensive and bipartisan reauthorization of the Head Start Program. I wish to thank Senators KENNEDY, ALEXANDER, and DODD and the other members of the committee for their assistance in moving this legislation to the floor. Passage of this legislation will ensure that low-income children are prepared not only for success in school but for later success in life.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff of members of the HELP Committee who have spent countless hours preparing this legislation for passage by the Senate. In particular I would like to thank Roberto Rodriguez with Senator KENNEDY, Catherine Hildum and Sharon Lewis with Senator DODD, David Cleary and Sarah Rittling with Senator ALEXANDER, and Beth Buehlmann and Lindsay Hunsicker of my staff.

It is my hope that our bipartisan efforts will continue to produce results as we move to final passage of this legislation and on to a conference committee with the House of Representatives. We must all work together to get a bipartisan product to President Bush for his signature as soon as possible.

DYSTONIA

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to call attention to a very serious, painful neurological disorder, dystonia, that affects many muscle groups simultaneously. We recently commemorated Dystonia Awareness Week and I would like to call further attention to this serious disorder.

Dystonia is a painful disorder characterized by powerful involuntary muscle spasms. The spasms cause twisting, repetitive muscle movements, sustained postural deformities, and debilitating physical ailments. Although most forms of dystonia cause no mental damage, people living with dystonia are often prisoners in their own bodies. Currently, no cure is known and available medical therapies can only superficially address the symptoms.

Approximately 50 percent of people with dystonia have a genetically inherited form whereas birth injury, physical trauma, exposure to certain medications, surgery, or stroke is the cause for the other 50 percent. Dystonia is not selective, occurring in all racial, ethnic, and age groups. It is significantly more common than Huntington's disease, muscular dystrophy, and Lou Gehrig's disease. Given the prevalence and dystonia's impact on so many Americans as well as the limited treatment options available, I am pleased to support the goals of Dystonia Awareness Week. The Dystonia Advocacy Coalition through the commemoration of Dystonia Awareness Week and several other outreach activities seeks to raise awareness of dystonia's impact on the quality of life of 300,000 people in North America.

I call on my colleagues to support increased funding for the National Insti-

tutes of Health to support needed advances in dystonia research. Research is needed to develop reliable tests to diagnose dystonia as well as access to new treatment options to improve the lives of people living with this terrible chronic disease. Until we can find a cure for dystonia, I respectfully ask my colleagues to make a prolonged commitment to the dystonia community that goes well beyond Dystonia Awareness Week.

ROBERT STURM

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to an honest, humble and dedicated servant of the United States Senate who has decided to turn in his Senate badge and enter retirement. For over 33 years, Robert E. Sturm, has selflessly served the Senate in various positions. His humble beginnings can be traced to his first Senate position as a mail clerk for Senator Birch Bayh in 1974. Bob undoubtedly performed his duties in an exemplary fashion, for his Senate career continued in the offices of Senators Dick Clark, Donald Stewart and Russell B. Long. He eventually rose to the respected position of chief clerk of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, and has served in that capacity for five current U.S. Senators including Senator PATRICK LEAHY, Senator RICHARD LUGAR, Senator TOM HARKIN, Senator THAD COCHRAN, and myself. After enjoying a 33-year career in the United States Senate, I speak on behalf of all of those who have had the pleasure of serving with Bob when I say; your retirement is well deserved.

I would like to share with you all the uniqueness of Bob's character, kind spirit and devotion to his position as chief clerk. Whether addressing an intern or chairman of a Senate committee, Bob always displayed the same measured approach, graciousness, patience and understanding. Bob never hesitates to place the needs of others before his own. It is commonplace for Bob to spend late nights at work in preparation for farm bill mark ups, accommodate last minute travel requests from impatient Senators and staff alike, fly to the furthest reaches of our great Nation to set up hearings, or answer any procedural question with the temperance of a man who has not answered the question a thousand times before. Robert Sturm is that indispensable part of your staff upon whom you grow so reliant, you wonder how you will function in his absence.

Bob, while a patient and understanding man, is not shy about enforcing the rules of the Senate Agriculture Committee which he loves. Any visitor to a Senate hearing who attempted to open a newspaper during the hearing, spoke too loudly from the audience or attempted to pass out materials not reviewed and approved by Bob, knows how quick the wrath of Bob Sturm can be meted out. Similarly, Bob guarded

the Senate Agriculture Committee hearing room with diligence and insisted that its appearance always reflected the high esteem in which he held the committee and this august body.

During my first hearing as chairman, I remember reaching for the gavel to call the hearing to order. As I looked down at the gavel, I was shocked to find that someone had placed my name on it. Humbled by this kind act, I turned to my staff and quietly asked, "Who did this?" The answer was of course Bob Sturm. During my chairmanship, I could always depend on Bob to place a few bags of my beloved Georgia peanuts at the seat of each Senator attending the hearings. It is the little things like this that exemplify Bob's attention to detail and willingness to serve. I also remember when the Agriculture Committee traveled around the country in the summer of 2006 to eight different farm bill field hearings. Bob was on the front lines of every hearing—from educating staff on how to select an appropriate hearing site, traveling in advance to prepare for the hearing, arranging all the necessary travel, hotel accommodations and food, to running the actual hearing—Bob was in control. Even after being exhausted from continuous travel, Bob was always the first one to arrive and the last one to leave each hearing and I never heard one word of complaint. Bob, as in the performance of all his duties, was meticulous and saw things through to the end. I will always be grateful for his devotion.

Let me finish by saying, Bob, that the Senate will sincerely miss you and most of all we thank you for your loyalty and the model of service you leave behind. Best of wishes on a healthy and happy retirement with your family. It is certainly well deserved.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CLAY PARK

● Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I have often said that one of my roles as a Senator is to reflect Hawaii, and show people the meaning of aloha through my own actions. Aloha is not passive, it is not easy, but it can make a difference in people's lives. I am reminded of just how inspiring and effective aloha can be by one of my constituents, William Clay Park. I remember seeing Clay at a Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs hearing on the island of Oahu last year. I was impressed by how he exemplified the spirit of aloha. More recently, Clay was featured in Hawaii Business Magazine for his personal story, and his professional work for Hawaii's veterans. I will ask to have the text of this article in Hawaii Business Magazine printed in the RECORD following my statement.

Clay was born and raised in Hawaii, rooted in the Native Hawaiian values of his "ohana," or family. As a young

man he joined the Army, and served in the Vietnam war. The war took a toll on Clay, but after leaving the Army he joined the National Guard, and started what would become a 30-year career with VA as a dental lab technician.

In 2003, Clay had retired from VA and the National Guard, and that could have been the end of his career of serving his country and his fellow veterans. Instead, he answered a call from a friend and learned that Helping Hands Hawaii, a nonprofit social services organization, was in need of help. Once at Helping Hands Hawaii, he realized that Hawaii veterans needed someone like himself to help them through the bureaucratic maze of VA benefits. They also needed someone with his kind of aloha.

Although he has only been with Helping Hands Hawaii for a few years, Clay's colleagues can already tell scores of stories about the length he will go to in order to reach veterans and help them. Those stories include hiking through Hawaii's dense forests in search of disconnected veterans who have taken to the bush. While many people pass by homeless veterans on their city streets, Clay makes it his responsibility to reach out to them, and get them the help they need.

The greatest price of war are its human costs, and many veterans pay that price long after they have returned from service. Our Nation needs more people like Clay Park, to show veterans that a grateful Nation is not willing to let them be forgotten, and will provide a helping hand when they need one.

Mahalo Clay, for being an example of the resilience and power of aloha.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the aforementioned article from Hawaii Business Magazine printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

[From Hawaii Business, May 2007]

CASUALTIES OF WAR

(By David K. Chao)

Clay Park joined the Army on a whim. Fresh out of Waiialua High School, the 17-year-old was trying to support a friend, who didn't want to go to the recruitment office by himself. The friend wound up failing the physical, but Park passed. In 1966, after being trained as a combat medic and dental technician, he was shipped off to Vietnam, where he saw some of the heaviest fighting of the war, including the Tet Offensive in January 1968.

Park left the Army later that year and went on to a nearly 30-year career as a dental lab technician for the Veterans' Administration (VA). He also served as a National Guardsman for 24 years, retiring as a master sergeant in 2000.

Today, Park is a case manager for Helping Hands Hawaii, a nonprofit social services organization with a wide-ranging mission, which includes helping veterans in need of physical and mental health assistance. Earlier this year he was honored by Helping Hands Hawaii as one of the individuals "for whom service is as much a part of life as breathing . . ."

Park took some time off from his busy schedule to talk with Hawaii Business about veterans in need. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and the coming mental health crisis that may overwhelm Hawaii and the rest of the country.

Tell me about how you started at Helping Hands and what it is you do there?

I retired from the VA in 2003 and shortly after Dr. Luke [Helping Hands Hawaii senior program director Dr. Stanley Luke] called me and told me he needed some help. I used to work with him at the VA. I didn't have any training in social work or mental health, but he thought that I could help with cultural competency [assisting with the Native Hawaiian clients]. I was only supposed to work for six months, but that was three years ago and now I help all veterans and their families.

As a case manager, I walk a veteran through the system—how to apply for VA benefits. I find them housing and food. I always carry canned goods in the back of my truck, just in case. For me, it's about being an advocate for vets, who really don't want to go through the system, but they need to talk to someone. I've gotten a few calls from wives, who say, "I want my husband back. This is not the man I married."

You've gone to some unusual lengths to find veterans and get them help. Can you tell me about that?

The last vet that I found was on the side of the Pali. He wasn't very high up, somewhere between Pali Highway and Kamehameha Highway, but in the deep, thick stuff. I'm an avid pig hunter, so it wasn't very hard tracking him down. I found a guy on Diamond Head once and I only had a brief description: Caucasian male, who lives under a blue tarp. That wasn't very hard either, once the police told me where the homeless are. Most of the time, they aren't in the mountains. They're in the city or on the beach. But I find them, and we talk and I bring them in.

What has happened to these veterans?

No one walks away from war unaffected. Everyone is wounded. You may not be hurt physically, but you are definitely affected mentally. Why is that? Why is it that a guy comes back and gets married and lives the Great American Dream—the house, the dog, the kids. But then, in his 50s or 60s, he takes a shotgun and blows his brains out. Why is that? It is because, when you are young, you stay busy. But as you get older, your body slows down, but your mind doesn't. And you can't cope. The ghost is always there and he comes to bite you every once in a while. Sometimes you just can't keep him in the closet.

Look what's happening now. The American forces are low, so they are sending these guys on two or three tours of duty. They come back with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), and they think they have fixed them up. And then they send them on their second tour. And they come back and they are worse, and they send them out for a third time.

Are you seeing a lot of Afghanistan and Iraq veterans?

I've seen a few, guys from my National Guard unit. But it's really too soon. But we'll see them, and it's going to get nasty.

How so?

The problem is that they activated units that have soldiers in their 40s and 50s. They are married and have children and jobs. When we went, we were full of piss and vinegar. We were wet behind the ears and we didn't give a damn about anything. When you go to war when you're older, your body isn't as strong as the young guys and your thinking is much different. It [your mind] can be damaged more easily and more deeply. They are saving limbs and putting in