

both in all-around competition in the floor exercise, and she also received the Gold Medal for the balance beam. And that was her favorite event. All Americans were proud to see Shawn's success, but Iowans are overwhelmingly proud of the self-described—and these are not my words, but other people described her as the daredevil with a big smile.

At this year's Iowa State Fair, the famous butter sculpture, which has been a part of the State fair for the last 45 years—a sculpture made out of butter, usually a cow—this year featured a cow but also a sculpture of Shawn Johnson.

Shawn is the reigning women's world gymnastics All-Around Champion, but she is also a teenager from West Des Moines who presently attends Valley High School when she is not competing around the world. She attends football games and school dances and tries to live the life of a typical teen. She goes to class 5 hours each day and then trains at Chow's Gymnastics in her hometown. With all of this on her plate, she still manages to get straight As.

Her talent is anything but typical. As a baby, Shawn skipped the crawling and went right to walking. She climbed out of her crib before she was a year old. As a toddler, she would build a ladder out of toys, scale the entertainment center, and jump onto the couch.

After seeing their daughter's abundant energy and fearlessness, Shawn's parents Terri and Doug enrolled her in a tumbling class at age 3, and she showed promise early on. Her coach at Chows Gymnastics in West Des Moines, Liang Chow, noticed her talents and honed those talents. He even submitted a tape of Shawn to the U.S. women's gymnastics team coach Marta Karolyi because it is tough for a gymnast training in Iowa to get noticed by a national team.

Training as an elite athlete did not come cheap, though. Shawn's parents eventually mortgaged the family home three times so that their daughter could achieve her Olympic dream, and they managed to travel with Shawn to her international competitions.

In June of this year, the disastrous floods hit much of Iowa. Shawn was training with the national team, but her heart was with her fellow Iowans who were suffering, especially her coach. You see, Chow's Gymnastics, which is Shawn's second home, is located near the Raccoon River in West Des Moines, and the facility suffered a great deal of damage from the flood. Shawn, knowing what this sort of damage could mean for her coach continuing to run her business, wrote a \$12,000 check from her endorsements to help get Chows Gymnastics back up and running.

Iowans have all known about Shawn and her extraordinary talent—and, of course, her big smile—for a few years now, and Iowa knew she would make them proud. But the world did not real-

ly get to know Shawn until these recent Olympics.

Despite losing the all-around competition to her U.S. teammate and close friend Nastia Liukin, Shawn handled herself with grace, poise, and genuine happiness. And when Shawn finally won the coveted Gold Medal on the incredibly difficult balance beam, her joy was written all over her face.

So I take this opportunity for my colleagues and everybody in this country to commend Shawn on her extraordinary performance in the Beijing Olympics, not only for medals that she won but for her hard work, her composure, and maturity. I compliment her. She did Iowa and America proud.

#### ILLEGAL DRUGS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I am going to now visit about an issue I often visit with my colleagues about, the issue of drugs, because I served with Senator BIDEN as cochairman of the drug caucus.

As a parent and now grandparent, I remain deeply concerned about the hazardous environment to which our children are exposed. Every day, we see more and more heartbreaking stories of a child being victimized in one way or another. Some of the most disturbing trends involve deadly drugs and our own kids. More specifically, there is an alarming number of kids who are being exposed to environments where illegal drugs are being manufactured and sold. Kids are also falling prey to unscrupulous drug dealers who are disguising highly addictive drugs to make them appear as if they were candy. I believe we have a moral obligation in this country to ensure our young people have every opportunity to grow up without being accosted by drug pushers at every turn, whether it is on TV in the home or on the way to school.

As a Senator representing a State that has been among the hardest hit by the scourge of methamphetamine abuse, I have witnessed firsthand how this horrible drug has devastated individual lives and families. I have seen the havoc wreaked on the environment as well as the child welfare system. I have listened to the horror stories of those caught in the grips of addiction. This is why I joined a number of my colleagues in passing the Combat Meth Act of 2005. This landmark legislation has shown dramatic results in decreasing the number of clandestine meth labs and increasing methamphetamine seizures.

While this is certainly welcome news, particularly for our first responders and local law enforcement community, meth labs in our communities are still a reality. For instance, in 2006, there were still over 6,400 clandestine meth lab incidents throughout the country. In my home State of Iowa, we have seen an 88-percent decrease in the number of meth lab incidents since 2004

when the Iowa Legislature passed a very important piece of legislation cutting down on the number of labs. Yet there were still 240 incidents of clandestine labs last year alone.

The Combat Meth Act has been particularly helpful in cutting down on mom-and-pop meth labs. However, our efforts have given rise to new and more disturbing instances of meth production, trafficking, and abuse that are becoming more prevalent throughout our country.

A case in point can be found in the State of Missouri, where police recently made seven meth-related arrests in just as many hours in the tiny quiet town of Ozark. The house where these arrests were made belonged to a 45-year-old grandmother, who was babysitting her infant grandson while his mother was away at school. Upon her arrest, she admitted using meth but denied that she was a dealer. However, while police searched the house, six more individuals were picked up on meth-related charges.

When it was all said and done, three children under the age of 3 watched as the police arrested their parent or grandparent for selling or possessing this terrible drug.

Sadly, this is not an unusual incident. We have here a picture of a baby. Scenes such as the one depicted on this chart are seen throughout the country. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration—DEA, as we call it around this town—more than 12,000 children throughout the country have been affected, injured, or killed at meth lab sites since 2002. Thousands more have been sent to foster homes or were victims of meth-related abuse in the home during the same period.

In my State of Iowa, the Department of Human Services reports that over 1,000 children over the past 4 years were classified as victims of abuse and that nearly half of child abuse cases have been meth-related. In 2006, there were 107 reported cases of child abuse where meth was manufactured in the presence of a minor.

Due to the shocking number of children who were being victimized by drugs in one form or another, I joined my colleagues in supporting a bill called the Drug Endangered Children Act of 2005.

This bipartisan legislation established a national grant program to support state Drug Endangered Children—DEC programs. These programs assist local law enforcement, medical services, and child welfare workers to ensure that victimized children receive proper attention and treatment after living in these terrible environments.

DEC programs greatly benefit local law enforcement by helping law enforcement coordinate in close cooperation with the Department of Human Services. This ensures a seamless coverage of child welfare and law enforcement joint operations. I am pleased to report that since this program was implemented a large number of communities throughout the Nation have

formed multi-disciplinary alliances for the benefit of drug-exposed children. There are 16 communities throughout Iowa that have set up DEC programs and more are in the process of setting up additional programs.

Unfortunately, the authorization for this grant program expired for fiscal year 2008. That is why Senator Feinstein and I introduced S. 1210, the Drug Endangered Children Act of 2007. This legislation would reauthorize this important grant program for an additional 2 years to assist States in coordinating law enforcement, medical services, and child welfare efforts to ensure children found in such environments receive appropriate attention and care. The Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously reported this bipartisan legislation to the floor. I urge my colleagues to join us in support of this important legislation and pass the Drug Endangered Children Act of 2007.

As cochairman of the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, I can tell you that the most at-risk population for drug abuse is our young people. Research has shown time and again that if you keep children drug-free until they turn 20, chances are very slim that they will ever try or become addicted to drugs. Unfortunately, unscrupulous drug dealers are all too aware of statistics like these. They have developed new techniques and marketing gimmicks to lure in younger users. The DEA and the White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy have recently issued warnings about highly addictive and dangerous drugs being colored, packaged, and flavored in ways that appear to attract use by children.

These drug dealers are flavoring drugs with additives to make them taste like candy. For instance, some drugs that have been recovered by the DEA and local law enforcement have been flavored to taste like strawberry. I have two charts just to show you the seriousness of this problem. One of these charts is of the popular novelty candy "Pop Rocks." The other is of some strawberry-flavored methamphetamine, which is known on the street as "Strawberry Quick," that was seized by police during a traffic stop in Missouri. You can see how similar these two products appear. It would be very difficult for a child to distinguish between these two.

Other flavors, such as lemon, coconut, cinnamon and chocolate are clearly being used to make highly addictive and dangerous drugs seem less harmful and more appealing. These flavored drugs are also being marketed in smaller amounts, making it cheaper and more accessible to children. According to an article in *USA Today*, at least eight States have reported instances involving candy-flavored drugs, and many law enforcement officials are expecting these deadly substances to infiltrate their communities in the near future.

Meth is not the only drug that is being flavored or disguised by drug

dealers. The DEA recently arrested three men in an undercover operation in California where candy flavored cocaine was being distributed. The DEA seized at least four different flavors of cocaine along with other dangerous substances. The estimated street value of the flavored cocaine seized in this operation was over \$272,000.

The DEA also arrested 12 people in connection to a marijuana-laced candy operation in 2006. The marijuana-laced candy that was seized in this operation was packaged to look like well-known brand name candy bars. You can see in this chart, all the varieties of marijuana-laced candy that this operation produced. Once again, you can see how it would be difficult for a child to distinguish between these marijuana candies and the real product. These drug busts further illustrate the fact that drug dealers will stop at nothing to hook a new generation on these deadly drugs.

Due to the growing trend of these candy-flavored drugs, I joined Senator Feinstein in co-sponsoring S. 1211, the Saving Kids from Dangerous Drugs Act of 2008, a bill that ought to currently move forward. Currently, Federal law enhances the criminal penalties that apply when a person sells drugs to anyone under the age of 21. When this occurs, the Federal penalties are doubled—or tripled for a repeat offense—and a mandatory minimum of at least 1 year must also apply. However, this penalty applies only to someone who actually sells drugs to someone under 21.

The Saving Kids from Dangerous Drugs Act, as amended in the Judiciary Committee, would expand the circumstances under which these enhanced penalties apply to cover the entire operation. Under our bill, the enhanced penalties that already exist would also apply to anyone over 18 years of age who knowingly or intentionally manufactures, creates, distributes, dispenses or possesses a schedule I or II controlled substance that has been combined with a candy product, is marketed or packaged as if it were similar to a candy product, or has been modified by flavoring or coloring with the intent to distribute, or sell that controlled substance to a person under 21 years of age. The DEA busts are prime examples of why we need this bipartisan bill to keep drug dealers from pedaling their poison to our children.

The fight against deadly drugs is an ongoing struggle. We must continue to do all we can to protect the most vulnerable among us. We must send a clear message to those wishing to prey on our youth that you risk serious prison time when you target our future. The National Narcotics Officers Associations Coalition is strongly supporting this measure. This organization represents 69,000 law enforcement officers who encounter these terrible substances on a daily basis and work endlessly to keep our children and communities safe. I am pleased that

my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee overwhelmingly voted in favor of reporting this important legislation to the floor. I urge all of my colleagues to join us in passing the Saving Kids from Dangerous Drugs Act of 2008.

I urge all my colleagues to join us—meaning myself and Senator FEINSTEIN, the main sponsors of the bill—in passing the Saving Kids from Dangerous Drugs Act of 2008.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

#### FINANCIAL CRISIS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wish to say a few words on the crisis about which everyone in America is talking. My phones, both in Vermont and here in Washington, have been bouncing off the hook with people who are outraged about the prospect of the middle class bailing out Wall Street. They are telling me: No way; we should not be doing that.

The current financial crisis facing our country should, in fact, put an end to almost any support for the extreme rightwing economic policies President Bush has been pursuing for the last 8 years and that, in fact, were pursued even before that.

These policies include, of course, huge tax breaks for the very rich under the guise that that money will trickle on down to ordinary people and create a prosperous nation. That certainly has not been the case.

Those policies include unfettered free trade, which says it is a good thing for corporate America to be able to throw American workers out on the street, move to China, and bring those products back into this country and run up what is now over a \$600 billion-a-year trade deficit.

Last but not least, and pertinent to the great financial crisis we are facing right now—a crisis which many people believe is the most serious financial problem this country has had since the Great Depression of 1929—is the whole of deregulation, not only of financial services but of energy and many other sectors in our economy, under the guise that we should have great faith in large financial institutions, that they will do the right thing and that they will benefit the people of our country and, in fact, the world.

We have learned tax breaks for the rich do not filter down but make the rich richer. We have learned unfettered free trade costs us millions of good-paying jobs. We have learned that massive deregulation, allowing large financial institutions to do whatever they want to do under the radar screen, will only hurt our economy and maybe drive it to ruin.

In the midst of all this, it is important to understand what has been going on for ordinary people in this country. Since President Bush has been in office, nearly 6 million Americans have