

We all know Senator Sarbanes's remarkable career in the Senate, a man we all admired for his honesty, his integrity, his honor, and his ability to get the job done. Maryland loved him by reelecting him on several occasions, often being the highest vote getter. Christine came back and helped Paul with his career. She also continued her work in our community.

Mrs. Sarbanes was a gifted teacher, a spirited volunteer, and a civic leader, while she was raising a family of four remarkable children: three young men and a wonderful young woman who has a doctorate in literature and is in California. She also was an avid civic volunteer. Her great passion was books. She believed books would change lives. Books changed her life. They helped her win a scholarship, they got her to Oxford, and this would continue.

For her, the world of books was so important, one of her advocacy areas was libraries. If you ever wanted to meet someone who believed in the power and the empowerment of libraries, it was Christine Sarbanes because she believed ideas belong to everybody. Books should be available to everybody. There should be a public institution that no matter who you are, no matter what your economic background, no matter what Zip Code you were born in, you could have access to the great books of our world. That is why she devoted herself to that and was on the board of the Enoch Pratt Library.

She did a fantastic job there. In fact, her memorial service will be held at the Enoch Pratt Library in a few days.

In her work, she also was a teacher. She taught at Goucher College. She taught at one of the more prominent prep schools, and she taught the classics. But in teaching the classics, we should all note that Mrs. Sarbanes was, indeed, a very classy lady.

When we think about her, we will always remember her, again, for being able to light up a room while she worked so hard to light up the lives of others. She will be greatly missed by all of us.

As all of you know, Senator Sarbanes and I shared a very special relationship in the Senate, but that relationship was also shared in the Maryland community with Mrs. Sarbanes. Mrs. Sarbanes was there for everybody, and everybody in Maryland mourns for her.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, when I came to the Senate in 1977, Paul Sarbanes was a colleague who came with me. There is no doubt that this was one of the true sages of the Senate. He was a great man, a brave man, with a tremendous ability, who served with distinction in this body. One of the reasons Paul was so successful in life, not that he couldn't have done it alone, but I think he couldn't have done it as well had it not been for the beautiful and wonderful wife he had. She was a tremendous human being.

I am very moved by her death. All of us feel grief and concern for Senator Sarbanes. There was a close relationship, one that was exemplary to all of us. She was a great supporter of his as he served in the Senate.

I used to kid Paul all the time: Paul, when are you going to smile? When are you going to laugh? He was always so serious. I used to dig him all the time about that. He would get a wry grin on his face. He knew what I was talking about. But he was serious, and so was his wife. She was a great human being.

I personally express my condolences to Paul and his family because I know how close they were. I know how much she meant to him and vice versa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, one of the real honors of serving in the Senate is meeting some extraordinary people. I was asked several years ago: Of all the Senators with whom you serve, can you name one you look up to time and again? At the time, I said it was Paul Sarbanes of Maryland. I liked Paul so much and respected him so much. He made such a contribution, not just for his State of Maryland but for the Nation during his time of public service.

My good fortune was not only to get to know Paul but also to meet and get to know his wife Christine. What an extraordinary woman. She was a gifted, thoughtful, articulate person whose background and interest was in the classics. She would lose me in a hurry when we got into a conversation, as we did once or twice, about her area of interest.

I can recall traveling once from London Heathrow back to the United States, picking up a book along the way that was titled "Rubicon," a story on the Roman Empire. I sent it to her, as if she needed my advice or background in that subject. She wrote me the nicest note afterwards thanking me for it.

She was a real lady and a great complement to Paul. The two of them worked so well together representing the State of Maryland and showing what a couple could do together working in public service.

I was so saddened to learn yesterday that Christine passed away. She was such a fine person. I wanted to add my voice on the Senate floor in sympathy for the Sarbanes family and so many people across the State of Maryland who came to know and respect her over the years.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL SERVICE REAUTHORIZATION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will re-

sume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 1388, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A motion to proceed to the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1388) to reauthorize and reform the national service laws.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I am pleased to rise once again to speak today on the Senate substitute amendment to H.R. 1388, the Serve America Act. As we heard in the statements last night, this legislation has been in the works for a long time, and I was glad last night to see it clear the first hurdle by a wide margin.

This is truly a bipartisan piece of legislation. In my opinion, it is probably the most bipartisan bill we will see on the Senate floor this year. At every stage, Republicans and Democrats have been working together to craft this legislation in order to bring it where we have it today. It is my hope that when all is said and done we will see a broad coalition of Senators voting in favor of the bill.

However, I do know, as of right now, not everyone in this Chamber is convinced this legislation is the right thing to do. So I want to take a few moments this morning to address some of the major arguments I have heard by those who appear to oppose the bill. Although many of these concerns appear to be coming from the Republican side of the aisle, I believe my arguments will be relevant to both sides.

One argument I have heard is that the bill will impose mandatory service requirements on our citizens. I mention this claim first because, quite frankly, it is the easiest to refute. Despite the rumblings of the black helicopters some imagine to be circling overhead, every program in this bill is 100 percent voluntary. In our country, no one is compelled to give service, and this bill will not change that. Instead, it will give new and expanded opportunities for people who voluntarily decide to participate.

Another more substantive argument I have heard is that given our current economic climate and budget deficit, it is simply the wrong time to invest in national service. The Government, these folks argue, does not have a role in these areas. I respectfully disagree with that.

I share the desire of many of my colleagues and, of course, of my constituents to see more fiscal discipline in Washington. But, in my view, an important aspect of fiscal discipline is investing in ideas that work. I support this legislation because I believe volunteer service is such an idea.

As has been stated, 75,000 national service participants leverage an additional 2.2 million volunteers every year—volunteers who are not subsidized by the Government in any way. That is a significant human capital return on what is, relatively speaking, a modest Government investment.

In addition, there have been a number of studies that have shown that for every \$1 invested in national service, there is anywhere from a \$1.60 to \$2.60 return on investment. That is in social benefits paid back to our society, whether it is kids being tutored, vacant lots turned into playgrounds and parks, homes being built, or in the form of disaster relief. It is an investment that pays for itself.

I have also heard people refer to national service as "paid voluntarism." I think this is mostly a question of semantics. We do need to be careful to differentiate between Americans who volunteer for full-time national service and community volunteers who give a few hours episodically throughout the year.

Most current national service participants are spending a year of their lives serving their country full time, and their benefits include a subsistence allowance and an education award. The subsistence allowance is barely a survival stipend, a below-poverty payment that is enough to cover only the basic needs. The education award is a very modest benefit to encourage people to seek higher education opportunities once they have completed their terms of service. But in exchange for this small amount of support, these members dedicate themselves full time to solving problems that span the range of human life: from dropouts to elder care, from homelessness to prison recidivism.

National service is not a job or a career move for these individuals. Indeed, no one is getting rich by participating in these programs. Those who join these programs are motivated to give back to their great country, to engage in their local communities, and improve the lives of those who are in need.

Once again, we cannot discount the fact that the work of those in national service programs has a multiplying effect. If the measure of this legislation was solely to provide national service slots for 250,000 individuals, I do not think we would have much to be proud of. But these national service participants will leverage millions of traditional volunteers and hundreds of millions of dollars of private investment in the nonprofit sector. The success of the program shall not be measured by the number of people who participate but by the work they accomplish.

Other potential opponents of the bill have tried to label this bill as another ACORN bill. Of course, they do so without ever even inquiring whether ACORN currently receives money under national service programs. Although I am not usually one to spoil a good mystery, it has to be stated they do not. In fact, in the first year of the AmeriCorps program, ACORN was forced to return the grant it received under the program because it could not keep its political activities separate from its other work—this was in 1997—and they have not received any funding since.

Make no mistake, I share the concerns of a number of my colleagues who do not want taxpayer funds to directly or indirectly benefit partisan political organizations, abortion providers, or illegal enterprises. While I believe current law prohibits national service funds from being used for such activities, we wanted to make it crystal clear that this would continue to be the case. I believe this was necessary in order to ensure the bill continues to enjoy bipartisan support.

So as part of the managers' amendment, we have included a provision listing in detail the prohibited activities for national service participants. Specifically, under the bill no one will be able to use a national service position to influence legislation, or for union organizing efforts, or to participate in protests or boycotts, conduct a voter registration drive, engage in partisan political activity of any kind, or provide abortion services or referrals. In addition, any organization that has violated a Federal criminal statute is categorically ineligible to benefit under this legislation.

Like I said, I understand the trepidation that some might have regarding these issues. Indeed, a number of so-called nonprofit or service organizations engage in what many believe to be objectionable activities. But I believe this language makes it clear that such activities will not be performed by national service participants. That being the case, I believe every Senator can support this bill without such reservations. I hope this puts the issue to rest.

I am sure we will hear some other arguments raised by skeptics of the bill, and I will do my best to address them as they come up. I am sure the distinguished Senator from Maryland, Ms. MIKULSKI, will as well. I just wanted to take a few moments to make sure people know these concerns have not gone unaddressed by the authors of this bill.

As every Member of the Senate knows, the process of drafting, debating, and passing legislation is not a scientific one. There is no way of calculating all of the variables and finding all the angles in order to produce a perfect result. When any group of Senators works together on a bill—regardless of whether they are from the same or opposing parties—the best anyone can hope for is a final product all the parties will proudly stand behind, even if they do not agree on every single section or provision of the bill.

The Senate substitute amendment represents the efforts of not only Senator KENNEDY and myself but of Senator ENZI and Senator MIKULSKI as well, and others. As I said yesterday, I doubt any bill we consider this Congress will be spearheaded by such a diversity of beliefs and ideologies. As one coauthor of the bill, I do not claim the bill is perfect just the way it is, but I am proud to join my colleagues as we stand behind and work to preserve this product.

I certainly respect and will work to preserve the rights of any Senator to oppose this legislation or propose changes in good faith. The ability of every Member to offer amendments is one of the richest and most important traditions of the Senate. That said, it is my hope we can keep the changes and additions to this bill at a minimum. If we add too much or take too much away from the bill, I think we may jeopardize the coalition we have worked to preserve thus far.

Like I said, I do not claim the bill is perfect. But I do believe, as it is currently written, it has just the right balance to ensure that Members from both sides of the aisle should be able to get on board.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, first of all, I rise to thank my colleague from Utah for his excellent statement. I think he outlines exactly where we are in terms of both the content of the bill and the way we have approached this bill.

It is my belief, as is the belief of Senator KENNEDY, that we govern best when we govern together. That is exactly what the Serve America Act exemplifies. The architects of this legislation are Senator KENNEDY and Senator HATCH, bringing to bear their own passion on Americans being able to give back to our society. Yet, with 16 years of lessons learned on the running of the Corporation for National Service, we have learned a lot.

So this bill, as originally introduced, had not only good ideas and good intentions, but came from lessons learned on how to better focus our efforts, get more of a dollar's worth out of our efforts, and, at the same time, be able to harvest this growing desire of people to serve. This year, there are far more people who are applying for national service opportunities than at any other time in our history.

Senator HATCH has also outlined the very important parameters we have set in the bill: no money will be going to participants to engage in partisan activities, no money going to participants that cannot demonstrate they are providing viable services and meeting the very clear requirements of AmeriCorps.

There are other issues both Senators HATCH and ENZI have worked so constructively on to bring to our attention—great yellow flashing lights around these issues—and we heard them. We not only heard their concerns, I want to thank them because they brought not only concerns to the table but very sound solutions. So I want to thank them for that.

I think on our side of the aisle, we have looked at AmeriCorps, we have looked at what President Obama is calling for, along with Senator KENNEDY, and the wonderful contributions of Senator DODD, and want to expand this program. But we realize there is a

limit. There is a limit to the money we can spend, and there is a limit to our organizational capacity on what we can undertake.

So on our side there was an attempt to find that sensible center to be able to focus exactly on what we want to do in certain basic corps, and, at the same time, to merely make sure, increase the number of people volunteering.

We have taken a look at the education voucher award. It has been frozen for 16 years. We made a modest increase, and our index will be to peg it to the Pell grants. This seems to be a sensible solution. There were those on my side of the aisle who wanted to double or even triple the education award. If we looked at inflation over 16 years, I would have been in that category. Well, in the spirit of compromise and consensus, we all sometimes have to not make the perfect the enemy of the really excellent. Therefore, in 2010, we will raise the education award to \$5,350—a \$500 increase. That would be less than \$50 a year over the last 16 years.

So we trimmed what the education award would be. We looked at how we wanted to triple the number of volunteers. We knew it couldn't be done in a day or a year, so instead, we phase it in over a 7-year period. Again, it was taking what we wanted to do, but organizing it at a pace we knew the taxpayers could afford, and so the corporation could develop the capacity to be able to expand the programs in a sound way.

Then there comes the stewardship idea, which is, how do we make sure we build in certain reporting that really would ensure we were getting a dollar's worth of service for a dollar's worth of taxes? Senator ENZI of Wyoming, the ranking member of the committee, once again brought his very sound accounting skills to the table, and we came up with a way to, again, ensure value for the taxpayer, value for the community, and do it in a way that does not create a lot of micro-processes. We have put a lot of work into this bill.

We don't want to lose sight of the fact that this legislation is to intended to really tap into the idealism of our young people. Idealism doesn't know gender, it doesn't know religion, it doesn't come from a ZIP Code. I believe it is really in the hearts of people everywhere in the world. It is a unique American characteristic to want to help your neighbor. Some people call it the Golden Rule—"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you"—but this is more. This is really saying: I want to take my life my talent, and put it to work in the community and make the community a better place. That is the original purpose of this bill.

Yesterday, I don't know how my colleagues felt, but, gosh, I was buoyed when Senator KENNEDY came on the floor, when he walked in that door with his jaunty cane and his good humor. The cheer that he brought to this

body—it was very edifying, very inspirational, very energizing. Senator KENNEDY brings his own unique energy to this.

I have been talking to him about this bill. He is so pleased that the Senate is taking it up. He has been working with us as we have talked back and forth about improvements and so on. I know how strongly he feels about it. If he were on the floor himself today, he would be encouraging us. He would be motivating us. He would be inspiring us to pass this legislation so that we can engage a new generation of young Americans in national service, while at the same time, welcoming the large-scale participation of all generations to address national needs because, again, the desire to serve isn't based on age. It is not only young people who feel it. We all do.

Communities across our country face challenges too numerous to count. If Senator KENNEDY were on the floor, he would be reminding us about rising unemployment, particularly among young people, rising poverty, and falling home prices. At the same time, all of us are aware of the fiscal challenges many States and schools and communities are facing, which means they have to cut back on services just when families and children need them the most.

Some of my colleagues believe we can't afford this legislation at a time when our debt is growing and our economy is struggling, but I say we can't afford not to pass this legislation. This bill offers innovative solutions to those challenges by asking more Americans to give their time to serve their country and their community. It answers the economic challenges of communities and families and what they are facing today. It is a carefully developed and focused solution.

We have learned a lot in the past 16 years since we passed the original legislation about what works and what doesn't work. Senator HATCH spoke eloquently about it a few minutes ago. This bill draws on those lessons and actually puts them to work. We have learned that service can make a big difference in addressing specific challenges and that service opportunities early in life can put young people on the path of lifetime service. We have seen that older Americans want to serve their communities with skills and experience and that social entrepreneurs in the private sector are coming up with very innovative ways to tackle the challenges we face in a way that is affordable.

This bill focuses national service programs where service can do the most good. I will repeat that. AmeriCorps, and these new programs with focused approaches, will focus service programs on where service can do the most good. In other words, following a Marine Corps adage, we are saying to the AmeriCorps volunteers: Be best at what you are best at, and be best at what you are most needed for. Be best

at what you are best at, and be best at what you are most needed for. That is why we are talking about an education corps. That is why we are talking about a health futures corps, a clean energy corps, a veterans corps, an opportunity corps focusing on poverty. This is why we are focusing our service efforts.

Social entrepreneurs such as those who started City Year and Experience Corps are the ones who are teaching us many of these lessons. When City Year began, it was about giving a year of service by a young person to do good in the community. That was the aegis of AmeriCorps. Back then, City Year took on all kinds of programs, but as City Year has matured, they found it is better to focus.

City Year focuses primarily on tackling one of our greatest national challenges—the dropout crisis in high schools. In Baltimore City, my hometown, only one in three students who starts high school actually graduates. This is a travesty mirrored in inner cities and rural areas throughout our country. City Year focuses on how to deal with that dropout rate.

Let's talk about Experience Corps. Experience Corps takes older adults and uses them as AmeriCorps volunteers. What they found is Experience Corps works best by working in schools. They are taking adults with years of experience and putting their skills to work, and it is making a difference. I have seen Experience Corps work in my own hometown of Baltimore in a school called Barclay Elementary School that has had its ups and its downs and its sideways. It has had talented teachers, often a good principal, and yet they needed help. In that surrounding community, within the shadow of Johns Hopkins University, Experience Corps works, and in many ways it has helped and assisted with volunteers and others coming from Hopkins. With that blend of volunteers, Barclay Elementary School has improved.

When I asked the CEO of Experience Corps—because the people in this age group can do a variety of things—why education, he told me that's what Experience Corps could do best, where it was most needed. We have learned from programs like this, which is why AmeriCorps will now focus on these very specific core programs.

We also found that this bill will, of course, encourages service learning opportunities for students, because students want to give as well. Working with Senator DODD, who has been such a leader on these issues, we now have Summer of Service opportunities for middle and high school students. These young people want to do it.

College is where so much of our young people's character and experiences are shaped. This bill recognizes that, going the extra mile by allowing the designation of 25 campuses of service which will undertake activities to help students engage in service that

will actually encourage people to go on to public service careers.

This legislation also creates Encore Fellows to help adults transition to longer term public service with a non-profit organization. These adults are volunteering by choice. They have knowledge and experience, and we just need to get them in the door. This is a way to bring in people who have retired and who have incredible skills, such as that retired accountant who can help a nonprofit get its books together and maybe find new grant opportunities.

Finally, it is to help older Americans get more involved through Senior Corps, RSVP, Senior Companions, and Foster Grandparents. These are excellent programs.

In this bill, we have taken innovation, creativity and lessons learned and come up with a new framework of service.

Right now, our country faces an incredible economic challenge. We see it in homes, families, factories, farms, and communities all over America. But as you look out, you don't see faces of despair. People believe in this country, and children and grandparents know and even believe, also, in great possibilities. So while we are facing these great challenges, we have a great opportunity. This is not the "me generation" of a decade ago; it is the "we generation." I think this bill will help us be "we, the people" who serve each other.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Maryland is recognized.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, first, let me congratulate my colleague from Maryland and my colleague from Utah for their leadership on this legislation. This is extremely important legislation expanding the opportunities for people to serve our country in national service. Both have been leaders on this issue for many years. I am pleased that we are on the verge of really expanding opportunity, particularly for young people, to have a meaningful impact in helping their communities.

I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mr. CARDIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 673 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. CARDIN. Madam 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.

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

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, as we talk with colleagues and work to

gather the votes, some of the naysayers, or those who have questions about the efficacy of this bill, say: So what, people go off and do a little bit of service, they feel good, and then they go off—OK, that is nice, but they could do that anyway.

Well, they could do that, but what is often overlooked is the impact that service has on changing the lives of people who do service. We could talk about examples on my side of the aisle. We have Senator DODD, who joined the Peace Corps. He has given long-term service to the Nation, including his work in Latin America, where he served as a Peace Corps volunteer. He continues that work on the Foreign Relations Committee. Senator ROCKEFELLER went to West Virginia as a VISTA volunteer and was so taken with the poverty and hard times—and inspired by the determination of the people of West Virginia—that he made a go of trying to help them with their economic development and the economic empowerment of the people of West Virginia. He went on to run for public office and became a Governor and now is a Senator. We know of his and Senator BYRD's devotion to West Virginia and, again, their advocacy for those who were left out—the steelworkers, coal miners, and so on. Our democratic members bring those experiences with them.

My own experience is very interesting as well. Yes, I do have a master's in social work and, yes, I did work in social programs. When I got my master's, I didn't only work in those programs that paid; I was also involved in those programs where I saw a need. While I was working in the streets and neighborhoods of Baltimore as a grassroots community organizer, it was very clear to me that people who had addiction problems had very few services to choose from. This was long before we had a drug czar and many of the programs we have today with addiction. I teamed up with a priest in the inner-city neighborhoods of Baltimore, Father Maloney, a Josephite, and we started something called Narcotics Anonymous, to open the doors. Many women came. We found the men and women together didn't get along. They each had their own story and they told them differently. I ran the women's groups and helped to start them.

Those women had a different set of problems. I would go into the Baltimore city jail every Monday night to meet with a group of women to help plan for when they got out of jail. There was no discharge planning. Nobody was saying: How are you going to get a job? How are we going to keep you off drugs? How are we going to get your kids back from foster care? How do we make sure there is no abuse or addiction in the home?

I would meet with them in the jail and work with Father Maloney when they came out. That was indeed quite an experience for a young social worker. I grew up with stories of women

who were so poor that many had only gone to the sixth or seventh grade, or they had no education. They had no hope, they had only despair. I worked as a volunteer and helped to get them the service they needed. It had a profound impact on me. When I went to the Baltimore City Council, one of the first things I did was jail reform to try to bring services into the city jail so there would be an organized, systematic way of doing things. So I did jail reform in the city council, now, chairing the Commerce, Justice, and Science Committee, we do prison reform in the Congress and for our Federal programs—to make sure our Federal prisons have the staffing they need; to make sure the people who were there have the opportunity to turn their lives around.

Then, we worked with incredible organizations—often faith-based—for post-prison discharge, so people wouldn't go back into prison. I know what those faith-based programs are. I worked for one of them as a volunteer. My lifelong commitment, starting in the streets and neighborhoods and working with Father Maloney, took me behind the bars to see what those lives were like. At the same time, now, in the Congress, we work for the important addiction services, work to make sure we have mental health parity, because so many people had these problems. Those are the kinds of things I did on my own as a volunteer. At the same time, we wondered what happened to the men. I asked, what happens to the men when they come out of jail? There were very few group homes, and working again with the Episcopal Church, a faith-based initiative, I went on the board of the Valley House. Do you know why it was called that? The 23rd Psalm says: I shall walk through the valley of darkness and I shall fear no evil. That is what it was. Those men were walking through and working through their "valley of darkness" as they followed their 12-step program. I saw a building that was tattered, worn, rundown.

The very first thing I did was get some other women on the board, get my own volunteers, and we did our own habitat for healing. We worked with the recovering alcoholics and painted, cleaned, scrubbed, and whatever, got a good cook in there, so that when the men went out to look for a job, they came back to at least a hot meal and fellowship. We cleaned up the family at Valley House and shepherded them out of the valley of darkness and we led them to sitting at the table where their cups began to overflow.

I learned a lot listening to those stories, putting in my own sweat equity. It was not about me; it was about the "we" whom we inspired. That is what community volunteer work does. While you are involved, it changes you. You listen to the stories and you know what that is. You want to make a lifelong commitment that the people you meet today you will never, ever forget

tomorrow. Those women I met at the city jail are now grandmothers. I hope those children are finishing school, and I hope their lives were turned around. I hope the men who were at Valley House went through that valley of darkness and went into the valley of life.

As for me, as I tried to help them turn their lives around, they helped give my life direction. That is what we are talking about when we talk about giving back, getting involved, neighbor helping neighbor. For those of us who volunteer, the changes are significant. What I say is, each and every one of us can make a difference. But when we work together we can make change. This is one of the bills that will help do it.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

THE BUDGET

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, next week, the Senate is going to consider the budget resolution for fiscal year 2010. This may be one of the most important debates of our time. For 50 hours on the Senate floor, we are going to debate making a fundamental change in our economy.

We need to face the facts. This President and this country have inherited the worst economic crisis in 75 years, and I do not exaggerate. No President has faced this kind of a challenge. We see it every day in the jobs that are being lost, the businesses that are closing, the homes going into foreclosure. We watched as our savings accounts dwindled during the decline of the stock market. Retirement plans are being changed. Children are coming back from college because families are worried about making the payment for their expenses. Fundamental decisions about homes, cars, and future expenditures are being withheld because of the uncertainty of our economy.

Passing the economic recovery package that President Obama sent our way was the first step to getting this economy back on track, but it is not the last thing, it is not the only thing. The next step is to pass a smart, fair, responsible budget that makes the economy work again. This is not a separate item. This is a continuing effort that Congress needs to make, joining with President Obama, to show we are serious about putting this economy back on its feet.

The President has proposed a budget that accomplishes that. It restores fairness for middle-class families, it reestablishes responsibility in the budgeting process, and it makes some smart investments in America's future.

This budget begins to repair years of neglect in fundamental national priorities. It makes critical investments that we need for the economy to recover, particularly in the areas of energy, education, and health care.

The President has proposed a return to the balance our country once enjoyed—careful investments in the future while protecting working families who have lost ground over the last dec-

ade. If we fail to make a number of critical investments now, it is going to be tougher for America's economy to get back on track.

Many experts tell us that in order for our country to fully recover, we have to take a leading role not only in the Nation but in the world. We need to lessen our dependence on foreign oil and develop renewable energy sources that reduce costs and create jobs.

America still remembers well \$4.50-a-gallon gasoline when those overseas who send us the oil decided they would squeeze us, and they did, and we couldn't say anything about it because we have become so dependent on foreign sources.

We also know that the way we consume energy is affecting the world in which we live. We know that global warming is a reality, climate change is a reality, and if we do not use different practices and different approaches with energy, we may leave our kids more than a national debt; we may leave them a planet which is uninhabitable in some places.

We also know we need to make it more affordable for Americans to extend and improve their education so they can reach their maximum potential and compete for good jobs in an increasingly competitive global economy. And we need to address health care costs. Whether it is an individual or a family or a business or a State or the Federal Government, the escalating cost of health care will break the bank no matter what the President's policies might be. We need to address it. President Obama has had the courage and I think the vision to say that has to be part of our agenda.

This budget allows for critical investments in health care. The President's budget will begin the transformation of our health care system by allocating more than \$630 billion over 10 years for fundamental health care reforms. How many times have we started this discussion and stopped it? Realizing the health care system in America needs dramatic reform, we find ourselves embroiled in debate and at the end of the day have nothing to show for it. President Obama stepped up in his budget and said: We are going to put the investment on the table to extend health care protection to those who do not have it and make it more affordable for those who do. He made that investment in his budget.

The budget would also support the adoption of health information technology and the widespread use of electronic health records. The Veterans Administration does this. Because they have electronic records, they can make a better diagnosis for a patient, they can avoid errors that might occur while someone is hospitalized, and they can reduce costs. We should do that for our health care system across the board.

The budget also expands research that compares the effectiveness of medical treatment so that patients and

physicians have better information on what works and what doesn't.

It would invest \$330 million training doctors, nurses, and dentists we need to fill shortages of health professionals, especially in rural communities.

It would invest over \$1 billion to step up food safety efforts at the Food and Drug Administration to prevent the kinds of outbreaks of contaminated food we have seen recently, the most recent being peanut butter, but before that a long list of outbreaks in food safety that concern Americans and their families.

This has been an issue I have pushed for a long time in the House and in the Senate, to try to coordinate our food safety effort in Washington so we can get more for our dollar and protect more families.

These investments will come when we need them. Over 47 million Americans do not have health insurance today—47 million people who woke up this morning realizing they were one accident or one diagnosis away from wiping out their savings. One million families in my home State of Illinois, a State of 12.5 million people, have at least one uninsured family member, including 360,000 of those families who earn more than \$50,000 a year. They earn 1,000 bucks a week and do not have health insurance.

If you look at the cost of health insurance, you can understand. For some families, even \$50,000 a year makes it difficult to protect everybody. Being uninsured is no longer only the concern of the poor. In fact, the poor are taken care of in our Medicaid Program. It is a risk for many of us, many middle-income families. Members of Congress are pretty lucky. We get the same health care protection that Federal employees receive. It is the best plan in the Nation. But my people in my home State are not that fortunate.

Let me tell you about a fellow in Springfield, my hometown. Doug Mayol, since 1988, has owned a small business in downtown Springfield. He sells cards, gifts, and souvenirs. He is fortunate that his only employee is over 65 years of age and qualifies for Medicare and also receives spousal benefits from her late husband. If this were not the case, Doug does not think he could possibly provide health insurance for his only employee.

As for himself, Doug knows, because he has a preexisting condition, that he faces the real possibility of becoming uninsured. Almost 30 years ago, Doug was diagnosed with a congenital heart valve defect. He has no symptoms. But without regular health care, he is at great risk of developing serious problems.

Like most Americans, his health care premiums have risen dramatically in recent years. In 2001, he paid \$200 a month for health insurance in Springfield, IL. In 2005, he paid \$400. And after he turned 50 years of age last year, his rate shot up to \$750 a month. He has a

little business. It is hard for him to pay that.

To keep his insurance affordable, he chose a smaller network of providers and higher deductible, which brought the cost down to \$650 a month. Then last year, the payment jumped again to over \$1,000 a month. Only by taking the highest deductible has he been able to bring that cost down to \$888 a month.

Think about that for a minute. That is \$10,000 a year that this small business operator faces for basic health insurance with a high deductible, and he isn't even a costly patient. With his high deductible, the insurance company has never paid a claim for illness or injury beyond routine care. Yet his costs have exploded.

He cannot afford not to have health insurance. Because of his faulty heart valve, he needs antibiotics before undergoing even a simple procedure, such as dental work.

Although Doug should see a cardiologist periodically, he avoids it. He fears it would add another red flag to his medical record. Think about that for a second—avoiding basic medical care for fear it will raise the cost of health insurance. That is a reality for a lot of people in America.

Why, in this wealthiest Nation on Earth, do we accept a system such as this, where a small businessman with insurance has to delay preventive care simply to avoid short-term costs, even though the long-term costs, if something awful happens, will be far greater?

All Americans want the best health care system in the world. Yet we all know that reform is not easy. The process will be complicated. We will have to compromise. And we will have to work together. But we have to start by laying the foundation. President Obama's budget does that.

The President's budget also has a promising vision for education. The budget provides funding for innovations in the classroom, improved student assessment, improved teacher training, principal preparation, programs that reward teacher performance, and a significant expansion of early childhood education. Is there one of these we would question if it were our child or grandchild heading off to a school? We would want all of this as part of the curriculum, as part of the schoolday for that child to excel.

These initiatives will help build America's education system so we can compete globally, and the budget will also change the way we finance higher education. It would finally end the Federal Family Education Loan, FFELs. This is a program that has proven to be outmoded, expensive, inefficient, subject to corruption, and a bad choice for students. A lot of us have known this for a long time.

The first person to warn me about this program was the late Senator Paul Simon of Illinois who retired 13 years ago. It certainly has been an unfortunate situation.

The current student loan FFEL program was an unfortunate choice for Holly Clark from Chicago. Holly wanted to be a teacher. To pay for college and graduate school, she borrowed over \$60,000 in student loans. Think about that. She chose this FFEL program because she thought it would lock in low interest rates until she could pay off the loans.

Because of fluctuating interest rates and changes in the program, she now pays 7½ percent interest each year. That is higher than she pays for her home mortgage.

Holly heard about a Federal program that encourages teachers to work in a low-income school for 5 years by forgiving a portion of the debt. She taught for 4 years in an inner-city school, but then the school administrators left and the school became extremely unsafe. She left that job. She still has her loans, and she is not sure what she is going to do to repay them without giving up her teaching career.

That is not what we need. We need young people who will submit themselves to teaching, not walk away from it. We can do better for Holly Clark. The FFEL program has proven to be costly for taxpayers and sometimes unfair to borrowers. The President's budget shifts the origination of student loans to the Federal Direct Loan Program starting in July of next year. We take the middleman out. We take the banker out of the picture because they are taking a profit. That change saves taxpayers \$94 billion over the next decade. The banks are going to squawk. The people who have these programs are going to be upset. They are going to hire the best lobbyists they can get their hands on and come and stand out in the hall and beat on us when we come in to vote. But I hope we remember Holly Clark when we are making these decisions and not the folks with the Gucci loafers out in the hallway.

This budget will also make spending on Pell grants mandatory, freeing this essential student aid program from the political process indexing the grants to inflation.

We cannot transform our education system overnight into a world-class system unless we prepare our young people with the best education.

On the issue of energy, the President's budget also provides a downpayment on weaning America from our dependence on foreign energy. The President lays out an aggressive path to reduce the consumption of fuels that contribute to climate change. Left unchecked, scientists predict global warming will lead to more heat waves and droughts over the next century, will result in lower agricultural productivity, threaten coastal areas with rising waters, increase severe storms and flooding and reduce biodiversity. These are real changes, some of which will be irreversible. We have to find a way to address this responsibly.

President Obama's budget proposes a cap-and-trade system to reduce green-

house gas emissions. We can reduce emissions by 14 percent below 2005 levels by the year 2020, and by 2050 we can cut emissions by 83 percent below 2005 levels.

Some say that is not realistic. They also said President Kennedy putting a man on the Moon was not realistic. We can do it if we have the political will and the guidance of a good President and the cooperation, bipartisan cooperation of Congress.

The revenue generated from auctioning greenhouse gas emission allowances would be used to fund tax credits for working families and programs to green the economy and \$150 billion over 10 years to develop clean energy technology that would create jobs. If this budget had already passed and funding were already available, Lee Celske of Aledo, IL, might have been able to put a small portion of that funding to good use. He has figured out how to create green temporary houses out of recycled glass—pretty cheap, as low as \$30,000 in some cases—quick to assemble, and he thinks they are a good option for communities recovering from natural disasters. These are energy-efficient temporary homes that can withstand a category 5 hurricane.

The factory that makes the houses would employ 30 high-tech, high-paid, green-collar workers. Over the last 14 months, Lee has presold nearly \$2 million worth of houses, relying on loan guarantees from his bank that would underwrite the factory once sufficient sales were in place.

But then, suddenly, the bank pulled out. Lee has done nothing wrong. The idea is sound. The small company is ahead of its schedule on growth targets and it would create precisely the kind of green jobs America needs. Yet his progress has been stopped by a freeze in the credit markets. The President's budget would help finance these entrepreneurs in the green economy.

This budget could create good jobs. It is a smart investment for our future. That is what the President brought to us in the stimulus package. This budget can create good jobs. It is a small investment for the future. That is what the budget continues to bring to us.

There is another element that is important. For too long the Tax Code has favored the wealthiest people in America. At a time when working families, middle-income families are struggling to get by, they were not getting the tax breaks. That was the old way of thinking. That was old politics, old policies. The President's way of thinking is to reach out to provide a tax cut for every American family earning less than \$250,000 a year. Ninety-five percent of Americans will not see their taxes increase a single penny under the President's budget. After 8 years of stagnant wage growth for the middle class, with costs for health care, education, and utilities going up, with the unemployment rate above 8 percent and growing, and with as many as 13 million families

at risk for losing their homes, American families need a break. This budget would do that.

I have listened to a number of my friends on the Republican side of the aisle criticize this budget. They say it spends too much, taxes too much, we have to borrow too much. They are ignoring the obvious. This President is committed to cutting the deficit in half in his first 4-year term. When President Bush was elected, he inherited a surplus from President Clinton, a surplus in the budget. It had been a 2-year surplus and it was reducing the debt of programs such as Social Security. We were moving in the right direction. Our national debt that we accumulated over the history of the United States to that moment when President George W. Bush took office was about \$5 trillion. So the President, George W. Bush, came in with a \$5 trillion national debt that he had inherited from George Washington until his moment in history and he inherited a budget surplus.

What happened over the next 8 years? Sadly, under President Bush, we saw the national debt of America more than double in 8 years. The accumulated history of the United States had produced \$5 trillion in debt. The 8 years of the Bush administration more than doubled that debt. President Bush took the surplus of the Clinton years and brought us to the biggest annual deficits in American history.

Many of those who supported the President's approach, many of those on the other side of the aisle who voted for his budgets—many who stood in defense of President Bush when he said I don't want to count the cost of the war; we will set that aside; we will call it an emergency; we will not put it in the budget—are the same people who made that excuse for 7 years during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan under President Bush. They saw the accumulated cost of those wars exceed \$700 billion and none of it was in the budget. None of it was accounted for. Many on the other side said that was acceptable.

They also supported the President's idea of tax cuts, tax cuts for some of the wealthiest people in America. Taking these things off budget, tax cuts for the wealthy—what happened? We ended up with the worst deficits we had seen in our history. That is what this President inherited. Now that he has promised to reduce the size of our deficit by half in his first 4 years, many on the other side are standing and saying we are destined now for bankruptcy. Where have they been for the last 8 years? Some of the harshest critics of the President's budget were giving a stamp of approval, year after year, to President Bush's budget.

What President Obama is doing is an honest budget, a responsible budget that moves us toward reducing the deficit in a time when the economy is in a sorry situation.

I think that is important. I think it is important we come together on a bi-

partisan basis to pass that. As to those who think this budget borrows too much, this President is on the right track of reducing the deficit. They have been on the wrong track for a long time. These are policies that they have offered before that did not work. They are yesterday's policies, yesterday's politics. It is time for something new. It is time for real change. Preparing the budget is about making choices and President Obama's budget is a document that makes the right choices. It is a document that is fair, giving tax breaks to working families, putting money into investments so their children can see a brighter future. It is a budget that is responsible. It puts the cost of the war online in the budget so we can track it as part of our real debt. It is a budget that also makes smart investments in America's future.

It is not just a matter of creating a job, a make-work job. This President's vision is to create the kind of jobs in energy and new energy for the 21st century; in education, so our kids can compete in this century, and to make sure our health care system is one that gives us quality care at the lowest cost. That embodies three sensible goals that we in America share.

This budget would bring true long-lasting change to America, and I certainly encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to look long and hard at this budget, realize the good-faith effort President Obama is making with this budget, and join him in charting a course of spending for the next 4 years that will move us out of this recession, create jobs and businesses and give America a smart investment for our future.

I yield the floor.

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. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECESS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask the Senate stand in recess under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:24 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. CARPER).

NATIONAL SERVICE REAUTHORIZATION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the bipartisan legislation

before us today, the Serve America Act. I would like to thank Senators KENNEDY from Massachusetts and HATCH of Utah, as well as Wyoming's Senator ENZI and Senator MIKULSKI of Maryland for their hard work on this legislation.

Last week I held a conference call in my office with two very impressive young men who are a testament to what the Serve America Act is all about. Their names are Mark Rembert and Taylor Stuckert. I met them last year in Wilmington, an Ohio city in southwest Ohio that has been devastated by the closure of the Wilmington Airport where DHL employed about 8,000 people—DHL, Astar, and ABX, three national companies.

Mark and Taylor decided they simply could not sit on the sideline while their community struggled to absorb this tremendous economic blow. Instead they founded Energize Clinton County, a nonprofit focused on economic development and environmental awareness.

In the midst of an economic disaster in their community, these two young men, Mark and Taylor, decided to serve. They are examples of what inspired this bill and what service to our country is all about.

I know something personally about City Year, one of the programs within the Serve America Act. City Year is part of AmeriCorps. My daughter Elizabeth served in City Year Philadelphia about 4 or 5 years ago. She was paid \$700 a month, as were the six or seven roommates she had in an old house on Baltimore Pike near the VA in Philadelphia. They met every Sunday night to talk about how they were going to, after paying their rent—about \$300 a month each—how they were going to figure out how to eat. They pooled their resources and figured out how to do that.

During the day—each day of the week, often 6-day weeks, often more—Elizabeth and other of her colleagues would go into a middle school in Philadelphia and work with local students in some of the poor areas of Philadelphia.

This program mattered to those students she helped. It mattered to my daughter who I said was paid \$700 a month for this service in City Year. It made her more reliable, and it made her more strong. It made her more understanding of the community around her, and it taught what so many of these programs over the years, so many of these volunteer service organizations have taught us. Whether it is the Peace Corps or Vista or City Year or Teach America, not just the people who are served by these young people but the people who do the serving, it stays with them the rest of their lives. It matters so much to them as they understand our society even better.

The passage of this legislation will mean even more Americans will be able to answer President Obama's call to service. The Serve America Act will provide opportunities for Americans of all ages and from all backgrounds to