

NATIONAL HEALTH CENTER WEEK

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the week of August 9, 2009, as National Health Center Week. National health centers provide care to 18 million people a year throughout the United States, through services at Community, Migrant, Homeless and Public Housing Health Center delivery sites. I wish to take the opportunity in a week dedicated to these sites to promote awareness on the expansive role they play in the health care of some of our Nation's most underserved citizens. It is important to recognize that at a time when health care costs have increased considerably across the country, these health centers have continued to serve an increasing number of patients without compromising the quality of care.

The Community Health Center Program, which operates in communities that are designated as medically underserved, has played a particularly important role as a health safety net provider in my State of South Dakota. Significant barriers limit access to quality health care for thousands of South Dakotans. The successful efforts of our State's community health centers have helped reduce many of these barriers by providing quality care to our State's low-income citizens. These health centers provide onsite dental, pharmaceutical, mental health, and substance abuse services that are often hard to come by in rural communities. In South Dakota, more than 50,000 patients received care in 2007, 40 percent of whom were uninsured and an additional 25 percent were covered under Medicaid.

I strongly support this model of health care delivery and commend the hard work of those in South Dakota and across the Nation in providing accessible, high-quality health care to those most in need.

WIPA AND PABSS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I urge the Senate to pass by unanimous consent the WIPA and PABSS Reauthorization Act of 2009—H.R. 3325—which was passed recently by the House of Representatives. The bill will extend, for 1 year, two programs that provide important assistance for Social Security and supplemental security income, SSI, disability beneficiaries who would like to return to work.

Both of these programs were included in the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, which passed Congress with bipartisan support. Under the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance, WIPA, program, the Social Security Administration, SSA, funds community-based organizations to provide personalized assistance to Social Security and SSI disability beneficiaries who want to work, by helping these beneficiaries understand SSA's complex work incentive policies

and the effect that working will have on their benefits. This program can help to reduce the fears many beneficiaries have about attempting to return to work.

Under the Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security, PABSS, Program, SSA awards grants to protection and advocacy systems to provide legal advocacy services that beneficiaries need to secure, maintain, or regain employment. The PABSS Program also provides beneficiaries with information and advice about obtaining vocational rehabilitation and employment services.

The Finance Committee and other committees in Congress have received testimony from disability advocates and other stakeholders about the importance of these programs to increasing employment among disability beneficiaries.

The Social Security Administration is currently authorized to spend \$23 million annually from its administrative budget to fund the WIPA Program, and \$7 million annually to fund the PABSS Program. However, the authorization for both programs expires on September 30, 2009.

This bill will extend the WIPA and PABSS Programs for 1 year, with no changes, while the relevant committees in Congress consider a longer term reauthorization. This 1-year extension will ensure that these programs can continue to provide disability beneficiaries with the assistance they need to return to work.

I thank my colleagues for their support for temporarily extending these important programs.

SNAKE HEADWATERS WILD AND SCENIC DESIGNATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I wish to speak on the Craig Thomas Snake Headwaters Legacy Act of 2008.

Shortly before Craig Thomas passed away, he introduced legislation, S. 1281, to protect the Snake River headwaters. His goal was to designate hundreds of miles of river in northwest Wyoming as wild and scenic. At the time, Senator Thomas stated that this designation would be a "badge of honor" for these rivers.

On May 15, 2007, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on S. 1281. Senator Thomas invited Jack Dennis, a world renowned fly fisherman, to testify in support of the bill.

During his testimony Jack Dennis eloquently made the case for wild and scenic designation stating "Without hesitation, the rivers and streams of the Snake River Headwaters are the most stunningly beautiful in the world." Jack further testified that "To walk these rivers and hear the music of the rivers, to see beavers swimming out of the lodge, to watch an elk come down to the river to drink at sunrise—these rivers touch all our souls."

On Sunday, August 9, 2009, I will be participating in a community event in Jackson Hole, WY, to officially designate the Snake River headwaters as wild and scenic. I will be joining Susan Thomas, Jack Dennis, and hundreds of grassroots organizations and individuals who never gave up.

Like so many others, the river touched Craig's soul. This coming Sunday, we will finish the task Craig Thomas started. It is a remarkable accomplishment—388 miles of river dedicated as wild and scenic, 388 miles of pristine water that will be protected for the enjoyment of future generations.

What an honor indeed.

SENATE EMPLOYEES' CHILD CARE CENTER

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Senate Employees' Child Care Center for 25 years of service.

The Senate Employees' Child Care Center opened its doors on February 27, 1984, as the first childcare center on Capitol Hill. Its successful opening is attributed to the dedication and hard work of Senate Members, employees, and their families.

The center has grown, much like the children and Senate families it has served. On opening day, the center had 27 children enrolled from the ages of 18 months to 5 years. By comparison, the center today has grown to a full enrollment of 68 children from the ages of 10 weeks to 5 years.

The center first opened in what was known as the Immigration Building and is now the Capitol Police headquarters. As it outgrew that space, a new facility was constructed nearby. Enrollment and growth continued, necessitating the construction of a new facility in December of 1999.

While many things have changed over the past 25 years, such as the location, number of children served, and the faces of teachers and families, one constant is this: the Senate Employees' Child Care Center remains a first-class facility. Families continue to appreciate the comfort of knowing their children are in a safe and enriching educational environment. In fact, many families refer to the Center as a "school" rather than a daycare facility.

We and our staffs strive for excellence. The Senate Employees' Child Care Center does the same. In 1989, it became the first center in Washington, DC, to achieve accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, NAEYC. This accreditation is the "gold standard" for early childhood education, and the center has maintained it continuously since 1989.

As in the early days, families with children enrolled in the center are encouraged to be involved in its daily operations. Many families spend their lunch hours doing "nap duty," others

serve on the Board of Directors, and others assist with special classroom projects. Parental involvement fosters a cooperative environment and further contributes to the center's excellence.

The greatest asset of the Senate Employees' Child Care Center is its teachers. One of the original teachers, Phyllis Green, continues to provide lessons that will serve children well throughout their lives. She is one of many dedicated professionals who connect with both children and parents in very special ways.

I offer my congratulations to the Senate Employees' Child Care Center on achieving this milestone and best wishes for many more years of service.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleague Senator BENNETT to recognize the 25th anniversary of the Senate Employees' Child Care Center's founding and to congratulate the SECCC on its many years of service to the Senate.

The original families and those who have followed share many memories of their experiences with the SECCC. They recall the development of a playground in what is now Senate Parking Lot 19; the center's role in the creation of the congressional holiday ornaments; the day the children watched as the sculpture Mountains and Clouds was installed in the Hart atrium; and the annual Fourth of July parade, with the children dressed in red, white and blue as they march from the child care center to the Hart Office Building. Most important, they speak of the growth and development of their children.

The Senate is well served by the Senate Employees' Child Care Center and the staff members who work there. I want to thank the center for its 25 years of service to the Senate.

BASEBALL HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE JAMES EDWARD RICE

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, today I ask the Senate to join me in recognizing James Edward Rice on the occasion of his induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame on July 26, 2009. Mr. Rice is a superior athlete who has made his home State of South Carolina very proud.

Mr. Rice was elected in this, his 15th and final year on the Baseball Writers Association of America, BBWAA, election ballot, with 76.4 percent of the vote. He becomes the third player in Hall of Fame history to be elected by the BBWAA in his final year of eligibility, and he is certainly deserving of this honor.

Jim Rice spent his entire 16-year big league career playing with the Boston Red Sox. Fenway Park was his second home, and he certainly gave the Red Sox organization and fans plenty to cheer about. Mr. Rice played his first game for the club in late 1974, and his career took off shortly thereafter. In 1975 he ended the season as runner-up for Rookie of the Year, second to his

own teammate Fred Lynn. After overcoming injuries, Mr. Rice finally settled in and was selected as the American League Most Valuable Player, MVP, in 1978, and throughout the rest of his career he finished in the top five of the MVP selection five other times.

An Anderson, SC, native, Mr. Rice, or "Ed" as he was known growing up, found himself in a challenging time of social change. After the public schools were integrated shortly before his senior year of high school, he was sent into a new environment where, according to Alexander Edelman with the Baseball Biography Project, his "engaging personality and gentle charm won over most . . . and helped ease the racial tension that accompanied integration." He quickly made quite an impact in the athletic arena as a member of the football, basketball, and baseball teams. He was an all-State kick returner, defensive back, and wide receiver. But it was his prowess on the baseball diamond that caught the most attention, and he was drafted in the first round of the amateur entry draft at only 18 years old.

Mr. Rice was an incredible asset to the Boston Red Sox, but perhaps his most memorable moment with the team had nothing to do with his abilities on the field. On August 7, 1982 Jonathan Keane, a 4-year-old boy attending his first game in Fenway Park, was sitting along the first base line when he was struck in the head with a line drive foul ball. Alarmed that no one was reacting quickly enough, Jim Rice leapt from the dugout and into the stands. Instinctively he picked up the unconscious boy and, cradling him, ran straight to the clubhouse where the trainer and ambulance were waiting. Tom Keane, Jonathan's father who was with him that day, recalled the event and noted, "In times like that, you really see the quality of the character of the people involved. Jim Rice is a really humble guy. He doesn't want to take credit for doing anything out of the ordinary . . . I think that's an understatement of what he did that day. He may very well have saved my son's life."

Jim Rice played his final game with the Boston Red Sox on August 3, 1989, but returned to the organization from 1995 through 2000 as a hitting coach. On November 1, 1995 he was inducted into the Red Sox Hall of Fame in its inaugural class. His plaque can be viewed at Fenway Park along with two of his Silver Slugger awards. In 1999, Sports Illustrated honored him as the ninth best athlete of the 20th Century to come out of South Carolina. And in 2001 he was inducted into the Ted Williams Hitters Hall of Fame.

Mr. Rice and his wife Corine now reside in Andover, MA, where they have raised their two daughters Carissa and Chancey. And though he is not permanently in South Carolina, his presence is still felt in Anderson through a community center named in his honor, the Jim Ed Rice Center.

I ask that the Senate join me in honoring him for his impressive athletic career and newest honor as an inductee into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

HONORING THE 437TH AIRLIFT WING

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, Senator GRAHAM joins me today to congratulate the men and women of the 437th Airlift Wing stationed at Charleston Air Force Base, SC, for their outstanding service in defending our Nation and for their great achievements at the Air Force's Air Mobility Command Rodeo Competition.

It is been 8 years since the attacks of 9/11, and the record of continuous operations for the 437th is an inspiration to us all. Shortly after the attacks, Charleston leapt into action, dropping humanitarian aid into Afghanistan only hours after bombers began pounding al-Qaida and Taliban insurgents. Later, when we put boots on the ground, the 437th led the first-ever C-17 combat dirt landing in the barren wilderness of Afghanistan to establish a critical forward operating base. Since then, Team Charleston has led the airlift of MRAPS to protect our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and performed some of the largest training exercises in Air Mobility Command. Over the years, they have delivered a staggering 1.3 billion pounds of cargo to support our troops and provide relief for friends and allies around the world.

However, when the 437th is not saving lives and delivering freedom, they are winning awards and bringing home trophies. We are especially proud of the 437th's accomplishments at the 2009 Air Mobility Command Rodeo Competition. The 437th competed with more than 100 teams and 2,500 people from the United States Air Force and allied nations. They led the C-17 aircrew competition and finished first in two out of three competitions, earning trophies for "Best C-17 Air Refueling Crew" and "Best Short Field Landing Crew." Furthermore, Team Charleston continued their distinguished record of world-class maintenance and added "Best C-17 Preflight Team" to their long list of awards. These are impressive achievements that bring great credit upon the 437th.

We recognize the outstanding achievements of Rodeo team members CPTs Robert Lowe, Joseph Beal and Jonathan Magill; MSgt Ricky Clark; Technical Sergeants Harold Bordeaux, Paul Eaton, and Richard Pate; SSgts Jessy Martin, Brian Parmerter, Hector Schunior, Nicholas White, John Paull, and Veronica Bankey; Senior Airmen Dennis Adams and Joshua Ramalia; and Airman First Class Daniel Jones.

I know the Wing is especially proud of the Rodeo team, but on behalf of the people in Charleston, the State of South Carolina, and our great country, Senator GRAHAM and I salute the outstanding work of the 437th.