

groundwork for vigorous economic growth.

Some may criticize the need to upgrade infrastructure as nothing more than filling potholes. But I can tell you that after many years of failure at the national level to fund infrastructure, our national "front end" is a little more than a little out of alignment.

If we do it right, investing in infrastructure will be a win-win. Smart long-term infrastructure projects will put people to work right now and will also build for the future, for future generations, for our kids and our grandkids.

We know that every billion dollars in infrastructure investment produces 30,000 good jobs in our communities. When these infrastructure dollars are spent correctly, they will result in good-paying jobs and improvements that will allow our communities and businesses to grow and prosper.

We have sound local projects in process right now. All they need is an infusion of capital. These local projects will put people to work building roads, bridges, water systems, modernizing schools, bringing new sources of energy online, and the list goes on and on.

These Federal dollars will produce results that will benefit our communities for generations to come. We need an effective partnership on the Federal, State, and local levels to identify these priority projects with rock-solid merit, and we will work as public servants to get worthy projects the money they need to make them happen.

The jobs bill must have first-rate accountability. We have seen enough bridges to nowhere to know a boondoggle when we see one. We need full transparency so the American people can judge for themselves the worthiness of individual projects through a process that is more open than ever.

We need to pass this jobs bill in the Senate for one reason: We need to get America working again. Beyond the bricks and mortar and asphalt and concrete, we need to invest in our people. That is human infrastructure. A good first step would be to pass the children's health insurance bill that is on the floor right now to ensure the youngest and most vulnerable Americans have access to quality, affordable health care. I hope the Senate can get that goal done tomorrow. We need to focus on education and training to equip middle-class families to succeed over the long haul. We need to modernize our schools with new technology and build new ones where necessary.

Unfortunately, we have seen some folks playing politics with our country's future. They even criticize a proposal to increase Pell grants for working families to send their kids to college. Anyone who does not get how important college financial aid is to Middle America is out of touch with the tough decisions that are made around kitchen tables every day in this country.

It is also important to consider how we got here. Years of trickle-down eco-

nomics, massive tax breaks for the well-to-do and the well connected, and a complete lack of regulation in the marketplace—that is the legacy of greed and abuse we need to correct. Just like the referees on the football field for Super Bowl Sunday, we need to put the referees back on the field on Wall Street. We need to make sure the crooks never again swindle honest people.

Our Founding Fathers said:

If men were angels, no government would be necessary.

Thomas Jefferson noted in his first inaugural address that among the elements of good government is the need to "restrain men from injuring one another."

We have our marching orders. We need to get to work. I serve on the Senate Banking Committee, and I want to make sure the Treasury Department, the Justice Department, and the Securities and Exchange Commission all have the tools they need in their toolbox. If they need more tools, we need to go out there and get them for them.

Over the long haul, we need balanced priorities to rebuild this economy from the ground up. We need jobs. We need to put people first.

I am proud to give a voice to family farmers and ranchers. I want Washington, DC, to start seeing the world through the eyes of rural America. The wealthy special interests have had the run of this place for all too long and have run this economy into the ditch.

I was pleased to hear the Senate minority leader state last week that he intends to cooperate to pass a jobs bill and other vital legislation. Working together always results in a better work product.

I am disappointed, though, that others have decided to play politics at a time when so many American workers are struggling and families are worried about how to make ends meet. We have financial markets melting down, an economy that is cratered, and a future that is bleaker than any we have faced in generations. We need a new plan. We need a new direction. We need change.

I applaud President Obama for his leadership in proposing this new jobs bill, and I stand ready to work with him and all my colleagues to rebuild this economy from the ground up. We don't need bailouts. We need jobs.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning busi-

ness, with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

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

TARP

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, it is no secret that I have worked for decades to bring greater transparency and accountability to all facets of Government operations. If there is one thing I have learned over those years, it is that you cannot achieve the goal of greater transparency and accountability without the access to information.

Today, we are experiencing the greatest financial crisis of our Nation's history. Daily we hear of more companies failing and the need for many more billions of Federal funds to save this bank or that investment company. In response to this crisis, the Treasury Department unveiled an initial plan to buy stakes in banks and other financial firms. That program is known as the Troubled Asset Relief Program known to all of us around here by the acronym TARP, T-A-R-P, and it is costing the American taxpayers nearly three-quarters of \$1 trillion.

In an effort to bring maximum accountability to the people for the TARP funds, Congress created a strong Inspector General with the broad powers to investigate and oversee the program, including access to the records of TARP fund recipients. Similarly, in an effort to provide maximum transparency, Congress required the Government Accountability Office, known around here as GAO, to monitor and oversee the TARP program as well. The Government Accountability Office's mission is to look at the overall performance of the initiative and its impact on the financial system.

The Government Accountability Office is also required to prepare regular reports for Congress. However, the Government Accountability Office cannot do its job without access to information, and I have learned that it does not have all the access it needs. Although the Government Accountability Office can examine the records of the Treasury itself and of any of its agents or representatives, the Government Accountability Office does not have access to the books and records of private entities that receive TARP funds. The connection there is public dollars. The public ought to have the right to know.

Believe it or not, the Government Accountability Office can't have access to information from the banks and investment companies that receive billions of taxpayers' dollars; that is the problem. This legislation I am introducing is intended to fix that as well. The Government Accountability Office is supposed to be the eyes and ears of the Congress of the United States. Well, it can't do that job wearing blinders and ear plugs.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL JOSEPH M. HERNANDEZ

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of CPL Joseph M. Hernandez from Hammond, IN. Joseph was 24 years old when he lost his life on January 9, 2009, from injuries sustained from a roadside bomb attack in Jaldak, Afghanistan. He was a member of the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment of Hohenfels, Germany.

Today, I join Joseph's family and friends in mourning his death. Joseph will forever be remembered as a loving husband, father, brother, son, and friend to many. Joseph is survived by his wife, Alison; his sons, Jacob and Noah; his brothers, Jesse and Jason; his parents, Elva and Jessie; and a host of other friends and relatives.

Joseph joined the Army in 2005 and had been stationed in Afghanistan for 1 month. Prior to entering the service, Joseph graduated from Mount Carmel High School in Chicago, attended the College of the Holy Cross and had entered the mechanical engineering and biology programs at Purdue University in West Lafayette, IN. Joseph was a man of great faith and an active member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church of Hammond, where he served as an altar boy and was a member of the choir. Joseph had many passions in life: he was a volunteer at the local animal humane society, and his interests ranged from boxing to model airplanes and vintage cars. Above all, Joseph's greatest passion was his family, who he hoped to take to a Chicago Cubs game at the end of his deployment.

While we struggle to express our sorrow over this loss, we can take pride in the example Joseph set as both a soldier and a father. Today and always, he will be remembered by family, friends and fellow Hoosiers as a true American hero, and we cherish the legacy of his service and his life.

It is my sad duty to enter the name of Joseph M. Hernandez in the RECORD of the U.S. Senate for his service to this country and for his profound commitment to freedom, democracy and peace. I pray that Joseph's family can find comfort in the words of the prophet Isaiah who said, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."

May God grant strength and peace to those who mourn, and may God be with all of you, as I know He is with Joseph.

RURAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2009

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support as a cosponsor of S. 150, the Rural Law Enforcement Assistance Act of 2009, introduced by my colleague on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator LEAHY. As our Nation copes with economic turbulence, we here in Washington are faced with tough decisions regarding

the Federal budget. Back in our home States, State and local legislators are facing their own tough decisions and are examining drastic cuts to budgets that could impact law enforcement services provided to citizens. These cuts are leaving law enforcement administrators wrestling to do more with less. Unfortunately, we are finding out that these administrators are forced with the only choice of serving their public with fewer officers, less money for training and less money for tools and resources for the more than 800,000 men and women who keep our citizens safe from crime. I fear we have only seen the tip of the iceberg that is our present economic state. Large cities and small towns are seeing the possibility of not filling vacant law enforcement officer positions due to the recent budget crisis. In my home State of Utah, with the exception of a few law enforcement agencies, most of the departments patrol rural jurisdictions. Some of the hardest hit areas by this economic downturn are rural communities. Police agencies in these communities often lose out to larger metropolitan areas for consideration of justice assistance grants. Under the present form of the Department of Justice's Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program, the sheriff's departments and police departments in Utah have seen a 65-percent decrease in justice assistance grant funding received from this program. These areas have their own challenges—issues such as illicit drug use that are not just unique to cities but transcend city limits and have manifested themselves in rural communities in much the same way they do in urban settings.

Press reports in the preceding weeks have been very grim to say the least. Joblessness is on the rise. The combination of revenue losses and budget shortfalls will see an increased demand for services on the part of these rural agencies. These issues will make it challenging to continue to meet the demands of normal calls for service. According to the chiefs and sheriffs in Utah, because of this economic downturn, the cost of everything is going up, including crime.

If passed, the Rural Law Enforcement Assistance Act would level the playing field by reauthorizing the rural law enforcement assistance grant under the Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program. This reauthorization will make agencies located in rural States and populous States with rural areas candidates for this grant assistance. These grants can be used to hire officers, pay for officer training, crime prevention programs, and victim assistance programs. For example, in the coming fiscal year some Utah agencies may not be able to purchase essential items and tools like rape-investigation kits which are critical in the gathering of physical evidence after a victim has been assaulted. Grants awarded under the Rural Law Enforcement Assistance Act

could be used to purchase these kits and other critical tools needed for investigations. As a longtime advocate for victims' rights, I find this troubling that there might be agencies in this country that may not have the necessary budget to purchase essential tools needed to investigate these heinous crimes.

For decades criminologists and economists have debated the link between crime and the economy. Some researchers have concluded that there is a ripple effect from the economy and it radiates out and displays itself in the form of increased calls for service, increased domestic violence, and increased property crimes. Presently, we do not have current crime statistics for 2008, but I will use a less scientific method: it is called listening to the professionals who each and every day answer the calls for police services in these rural areas. They tell me that they are seeing an increase in burglaries, domestic violence, emergency mental health committals, and more calls for service. Some agencies are down in personnel numbers. However, these law enforcement professionals are forging ahead doing the very best they can with whatever means they have. They are not looking at these grants as a free pass to purchase frivolous big-ticket items that have little to do with their agency's mission. These administrators tell me they are hopeful this act will pass so that they can continue to serve the rural communities who have come to expect the most basic of police services as a right guaranteed by the Constitution in "ensuring domestic tranquility."

My colleagues in this Chamber have taken great pains to examine and discuss a way to lead our country out of this crisis and get our economy moving again. We should be scrutinizing Government spending in this tight economy. But I cannot think of a better form of economic stimulus than making justice assistance grants available to rural communities and metropolitan areas alike. However, rural agencies currently find themselves on the outside looking in under the present JAG formula. The reauthorization of the Rural Law Enforcement Assistance Act would give rural agencies a better opportunity at receiving this grant assistance.

In closing, I quote the Greek philosopher Plato who said the following about communities: "The community which has neither poverty nor riches will always have the noblest principles."

This Nation is one large framework of communities and was founded on some of the noblest principles ever recorded in history. Some of our citizens choose a city lifestyle, and some have selected a rural small town life. Crime does not distinguish between urban and rural. The more than 800,000 men and women who make up the law enforcement community that keep our streets