

life most people could not imagine today. Despite having polio and only 4 months of schooling, Hamer became a matriarch of the voting rights movement.

On August 31, 1962, Hamer decided to exercise her constitutional right to vote by traveling 26 miles in Mississippi to register only to be confronted by the highway patrol and literacy test requirements. After being denied her right to vote she didn't just sit down, she stood up and joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and traveled all across the country speaking and registering other people to vote.

Hamer also helped organize "Freedom Summer" in 1964. She and thousands of civil rights supporters, many of them White college students, traveled to Mississippi and other Southern States to try to end the long time political disenfranchisement of African Americans in the region. Despite these nonviolent efforts for equality, on the very first day of Freedom Summer, three volunteers were brutally murdered. As America continued to march toward equality the Nation and its political leaders began to realize the horrific battle being waged against African Americans seeking equal treatment under the law.

As violence and frustration mounted, President Johnson pushed Congress to act and pass voting rights legislation. After research, multiple hearings and the longest filibuster in Senate history, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This bill provided all Americans—regardless of color—with nationwide protections against barriers and access to the voting booth. It contained protections against systematic methods of disenfranchisement by States and localities. Since its enactment, Congress has reauthorized the landmark legislation in an effort to remain vigilant against any forms of disenfranchisement.

In 2006, when Congress last took up reauthorization of this legislation, civil rights leader Congressman JOHN LEWIS said, "forty-one years ago I gave a little blood on that bridge. So when I see what's happening in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, it's a beginning of an effort not only to violate the letter but the spirit of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. And that must not be allowed to happen." With overwhelming bipartisan support, the House of Representatives passed the bill by a vote of 390–33 and the U.S. Senate passed the bill by a vote of 98–0.

Despite the bipartisan support and a large array of evidence demonstrating the continuing need for this legislation, some have argued that this legislation is no longer warranted. To those people, I say you are wrong. I have seen examples in my own State that prove how necessary this legislation is today. During my Senate campaign, just 4 years ago—the very same time the Congress was providing near unanimous support for the Voting Rights

Act—I had the unfortunate experience of witnessing deceptive practices and tactics used to undermine the constitutional right to vote. Lines were inexplicably longer and slower at polling locations in African-American districts and not simply because there were more people voting. Phone calls were made to minority districts reminding them to vote on Wednesday, not Tuesday; and a fraudulent sample ballot was targeted to confuse minority voters. I remind you that this was in 2006, not 1956.

Just two years later, in the 2008 election, substantial barriers were implemented making it difficult for eligible voters to vote. These included the purging of voter rolls, misleading voter information and voter intimidation. Take for example, an election administrator in Mississippi improperly purging approximately 10,000 voters from the rolls from her home computer; or the local prosecutor in Ohio who requested via subpoena personal information for 40 percent of voters who had registered during the same day registration and voting period in the State. These are real examples of incidents occurring today—45 years after we passed the Voting Rights Act.

Despite attempts to ignore or chip away at the protections provided to all Americans by the Voting Rights Act, this legislation remains relevant and provides the most significant and essential tool in ensuring continuity and the integrity of our democratic system. Our former colleague Ted Kennedy once said we need to "seek the reign of justice in which voting rights and equal protection of the law will everywhere be enjoyed." On this 45th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, I urge my colleagues to continue their bipartisan support for this critical legislation and for equal access to the voting booth for all.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on behalf of the women of America to recognize, honor, and celebrate the 90th anniversary of their voting rights on August 26, 2010—Women's Equality Day. I know my colleagues join me, in acknowledging the tremendous contributions women have made to America and the historic significance of reaching this milestone in women's history.

The 72-year struggle of suffragists, from the first women's rights convention held in Seneca Falls, NY, in July 1848 to the passage of the 19th amendment of the U.S. Constitution on August 26, 1920, bears witness to the sacrifice and dedication of the leaders of the early women's rights movement who never wavered from their intent to reach the goal of full enfranchisement.

We must thank Elizabeth Cady Stanton, born in 1815 in Johnstown, NY, who organized the first women's rights convention with Lucretia Mott and other courageous women in 1848. Their early advocacy for voting rights, protection from domestic violence, the right to own property, and other social

reforms that promoted equality are what we continue to support for women today. The "Declaration of Sentiments" speech Mrs. Stanton delivered at that July convention called for "all men and women" to be recognized as created equal under the law. Her celebrated 50-year partnership that began in 1851 with Susan B. Anthony brought to the public consciousness the importance of equality rights for women. That is a sacred trust we must continue to support.

On August 26, 1970—the 50th anniversary—the National Organization of Women, NOW, called upon women nationwide to strike for equality in protest of the fact that women still did not have equal rights, 40 years after passage of the 19th amendment. In New York City, 50,000 women marched down Fifth Avenue to demonstrate in support of the women's movement and securing equality rights, as did women in 40 other cities across America that day. U.S. Representative Bella Abzug addressed the NYC crowd and was instrumental in getting Congress in 1971 to officially recognize August 26 as Women's Equality Day.

In 1776, Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams, sent an urgent message to her husband, who was a delegate to the Second Continental Congress, stating: "In the new Code of Laws, I desire you would remember the ladies." It took 144 years for women's equality rights to be sanctioned by Congress, and I ask, Mr. President, that we take this opportunity on August 26, 2010, to honor this 90th anniversary and the remarkable contributions women have made to this country. The American people owe a debt of gratitude to the early suffragists for remaining steadfast in the face of overwhelming opposition in advocacy on behalf of the equality rights for all American citizens that our Constitution supports today.

SECURE AND RESPONSIBLE DRUG DISPOSAL ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for their support in passing S. 3397, the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act by unanimous consent this week. I thank the Senate cosponsors of this bill—Senator GRASSLEY, Senator BROWN of Ohio, Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator COLLINS, Senator CORKER, Senator FEINGOLD, Senator KOHL, Senator SCHUMER and Senator DURBIN. I especially thank my lead cosponsor, Senator CORNYN, and his counsel Gustav Eyer for their significant efforts on behalf of this important legislation.

When the Drug Enforcement Administration brought this issue to my attention, I was eager to work on it because this is such a commonsense bill.

We know that prescription drug abuse is on the rise and what is even scarier is that it is on the rise among teenagers. In fact, teens abuse prescription drugs more than any illicit drug

besides marijuana. And according to the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 55 percent of teens say that it is easy to get prescription drugs from their parents' medicine cabinets. We also know that up to 17 percent of all prescription drug medication goes unused each year.

This bill is an important step towards getting unused, unwanted or expired medication off families' shelves and into the hands of proper authorities. The bill makes it possible for State and local law enforcement "take-back" programs to accept controlled substances as well, which is something that is currently very difficult for them to do. I introduced this legislation because I believe we have to give families a better option than either leaving dangerous medication in their homes or flushing such medication into the water supply.

Parents know that keeping unwanted prescription drugs in their homes increases the risk that young people will find them, but current law provides them with few alternatives. By making it easier for people to dispose of controlled substances they no longer need, we can reduce teens' access to these drugs and help curb teen drug abuse. This bill amends the Controlled Substances Act to allow the Attorney General to draft regulations permitting authorized entities to accept and dispose of controlled substances. These regulations will enable state, local, and private entities to operate drug take-back programs for all prescription drugs, while taking the necessary steps to prevent unlawful diversion and promote safe disposal.

Senator CORNYN recounts with great specificity the provisions of this bill that were added after consultation with many of our House colleagues and their staffs. I want to mention those members whose contributions to this bill have improved it greatly: Representatives HENRY WAXMAN, JOE BARTON, JAY INSLEE, BART STUPAK, and LAMAR SMITH. I am grateful to their offices for working with us to get this bill to a place where it could obtain the unanimous support of the U.S. Senate, and I second Senator CORNYN's comments about the specific contributions of each of those individuals and their offices.

The provisions that we added after collaboration with House offices, along with the bill's "no cost" estimate from the Congressional Budget Office, are among the many reasons the bill enjoys the support of 41 State attorneys general, the Department of Justice, and the National Association of Chain Drug Stores. They also prove that this bill is bicameral in its design, as well as bipartisan.

I want to thank all of my colleagues again for their support.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I rise to thank and congratulate my colleagues for passing the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act by unanimous consent. I am proud to have worked close-

ly with Senator KLOBUCHAR to draft and introduce the bill, and I thank her and her chief counsel, Paige Herwig, for their ideas and advocacy of commonsense drug disposal solutions.

The Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act will make a cost-free change to the Controlled Substances Act to permit State and private entities to accept unused controlled substances through drug take-back programs. As the Senate unanimously recognized, the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act is necessary because up to 17 percent of prescribed medication goes unused every year.

State, local, and private entities already have established drug take-back programs to keep some of this unwanted medication away from children and drug abusers. But the Federal Controlled Substances Act, CSA, currently prevents these drug take-back programs from accepting the most dangerous medications—controlled substances. The CSA particularly prohibits people prescribed controlled substances from giving them to any person or entity without express permission from the Drug Enforcement Administration. As a result, individual consumers and long-term care facilities now either stockpile unwanted controlled substances or dispose of them in improper ways, such as flushing them into the water supply. This can lead to drug diversion or water pollution.

Diverted prescription drugs contributed to a 114-percent increase in overdose deaths involving prescription opioids between 2001 and 2005, and the number of treatment admissions for prescription opioids increased 74 percent from 2002 to 2006. Troublingly, over one-third of new prescription drug abusers are teenagers, who now abuse prescription drugs more than any controlled substance except marijuana.

This bill will fix the problems of unwanted prescription drug stockpiling and improper disposal by amending the CSA to allow the Attorney General to draft regulations permitting authorized entities to accept and dispose of controlled substances. These regulations will enable state, local, and private entities to operate drug take-back programs for all prescription drugs in a safe and effective manner consistent with diversion controls.

In discussing how the bill will allow drug take-back programs to accept unwanted controlled substances, I want to highlight certain provisions we added to the bill after collaborating with House colleagues and their staff. First, in authorizing new drug disposal regulations, the bill makes clear that "the Attorney General shall take into consideration the public health and safety, as well as the ease and cost of program implementation and participation by various communities." Representative JAY INSLEE, who has been a strong advocate for drug disposal programs, suggested this important provision. It ensures that the planned drug disposal regulations will give States

and private entities wide latitude to design the most effective take-back programs for their communities. This includes considering the differences between rural and urban communities.

Second, the bill notes that the Attorney General's regulations "may not require any entity to establish or operate a delivery or disposal program." Representative JOE BARTON, along with other members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, proposed this language to clarify that no State, town, or business will have to run a drug take-back program unless they want to do so. This provision is a welcomed change from the type of unfunded mandates we so often see in Federal laws.

Third, the bill allows long-term care facilities to dispose of their residents' medications, and it permits "any person lawfully entitled to dispose of [a] decedent's property" to deliver the decedent's unused medication for disposal. These common-sense provisions were advanced by Representatives BART STUPAK, HENRY WAXMAN, LAMAR SMITH, and other House members. They address the specific concerns of long-term care facilities and the practical worries of anyone who loses a loved one.

These collected provisions, along with the bill's "no cost" estimate from the Congressional Budget Office, are among the many reasons the bill enjoys the support of 41 State attorneys general, the Department of Justice, and the National Association of Chain Drug Stores. They also prove that this bill is bicameral in its design, as well as bipartisan.

By passing this bill, we have taken a major step toward getting unwanted prescription drugs out of medicine cabinets and off our streets. We have given State, local, and private groups more authority to serve their communities, and we have done so in a cost-free manner.

I believe the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act exemplifies the type of bipartisan legislation Congress should look to pass. I thank my colleagues again for supporting it unanimously, and I look forward to it becoming law.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I celebrate and honor the venerable life, not of a person, but of the most important and successful domestic program in our Nation's history. On August 14, Social Security will turn 75.

In a special Message to Congress in June 1934, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt stated the promise of Social Security, saying:

If, as our Constitution tells us, our Federal Government was established among other things, to promote the general welfare, it is our plain duty to provide for that security upon which welfare depends.

President Roosevelt outlined his intention to "undertake the great task of