

Fifteen years ago, a bomb in Oklahoma City took the life of fifteen Social Security employees, one office volunteer, and 21 office visitors. Social Security employees across the country responded to help survivors and the families of victims. Employees from around the country converged on Oklahoma to assist taking claims, answering questions, and providing comfort to the hundreds of victims and their families.

Following the devastation of September 11, 2001, employees in the New York region immediately came to the assistance of families of those killed in the World Trade Center, at the Pentagon, and at the plane crash site in Pennsylvania, so that claims could be taken and paid as quickly as possible. Social Security allowed payment of survivors' claims with airline manifests or employer records rather than death certificates. Within days, Social Security launched a full-scale outreach effort to find families of victims and help them apply for benefits. A special Web page was set up. Public information spots aired on television. And Social Security contacted about 60 consulates to ensure that foreign survivors who might be eligible for benefits were reached.

By December 2001, Social Security had taken more than 5,000 disaster-related claims. Social Security set up Family Assistance Centers at Pier 94 in Manhattan and Liberty State Park in New Jersey. The New York Regional Commissioner continued to work with the Bureau of Vital Statistics to post death certificates for the survivors of victims whose bodies had not been recovered.

Social Security was also one of the first agencies at the Pentagon Family Assistance Center in Virginia offering assistance to victims and their families. In Pennsylvania, Social Security staff assisted family members of victims on applying for benefits.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Social Security moved quickly to ensure that monthly payments to beneficiaries continued uninterrupted. Immediate payment procedures allowed for on-the-spot payments if beneficiaries could not get their benefit check. Social Security opened a temporary office in the Houston Astrodome, and provided service 7 days a week. Social Security employees were on site at FEMA's Family Assistance Centers, and many offices offered extended hours of service through Labor Day weekend to help evacuees.

Just recently, in my home State of Montana, in the old city hall building next to the Libby Police Department in Lincoln County, eight employees from Social Security arrived. They quickly set up a processing center to assist the victims of the Environmental Protection Agency's first-ever public health emergency. The Social Security employees tirelessly answered questions and handled a steady stream of claims from applicants diagnosed with asbes-

tos-related disease. Social Security's work helping the good people in and around Libby Montana was deeply important to me.

Social Security has been described as the bedrock of our industrial society. It has been called the beacon of light for those on life's stormy seas. It has been called a pillar of our democracy. Social Security offers Americans peace of mind.

Social Security has lived up to its message. It has stood as a silent partner to those in need. It has done all this by sending about 99 percent of its annual budget back to the people as benefit payments. Only about 1 percent of Social Security's budget goes toward administrative expenses. The rest fulfills the promise of its mission.

Social Security can and should work for the next 75 years, and for generations beyond that. Now that Social Security is here, now that Social Security has proven itself, it is up to all of us to protect and maintain it. It is up to us to assure the millions of Americans that currently rely on Social Security and the millions more who pay into it that Social Security is a promise that we can and will keep.

In the words of Carl Sandburg, "In these times you have to be an optimist to open your eyes when you awake in the morning." Our optimism can be found in the accomplishments of Social Security. I celebrate its 75th birthday.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, next week our Nation celebrates the 75th anniversary of Social Security, a vital program that has provided comfort and security for millions of Americans through the years.

During my career in the Senate, I have fought to protect Social Security benefits for our Arkansas seniors. I believe in the promise our government made to working Americans—that if we work hard, Social Security will be there to help us in our golden years. Social Security has made a healthy and secure retirement possible for tens of millions of Americans, including my own mother.

Since its inception, Social Security has helped provide stability for Arkansans who otherwise may not have had an income at all.

When President Roosevelt signed Social Security into law on August 14, 1935, he said:

The civilization of the past hundred years, with its startling industrial changes, has tended more and more to make life insecure. Young people have come to wonder what would be their lot when they came to old age. The man with a job has wondered how long the job would last. This law, too, represents a cornerstone in a structure which is being built but is by no means complete. It is, in short, a law that will take care of human needs and at the same time provide the United States an economic structure of vastly greater soundness.

More than 600,000 Arkansans are enrolled in Social Security, and I am proud of my work on their behalf. Last year, I pushed for relief for Arkansas's beneficiaries who would not receive

cost-of-living adjustments because of the economy. I have consistently opposed attempts to privatize Social Security, and I do not support a reduction in Social Security's current guaranteed benefits.

I have met with Arkansans from all four corners of the State to hear their concerns about Social Security. I believe that providing adequate resources for the Social Security Administration is a crucial first step toward strengthening this vital program. As the baby boom generation enters retirement, we will be asking more of the Social Security Administration's services, and we must work to make certain the trust funds are well maintained.

As we commemorate the 75th anniversary of Social Security, I remain committed to protecting Social Security benefits for Arkansans and all Americans. I will continue to use my position as the chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Social Security to fight to ensure seniors receive the benefits they have earned and deserve.

ALCOHOL REGULATORY EFFECTIVENESS ACT

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to bring the attention of the Senate to a recent joint resolution passed by the California State Legislature. This resolution, S.J. Res. 34, urges Congress to defeat the Comprehensive Alcohol Regulatory Effectiveness Act of 2010, H.R. 5034, a bill that would restrict legal challenges to unconstitutional alcohol regulation laws and negatively impact the American wine industry.

This bill is being described by its proponents as an effort to promote regulation of alcohol and protect the public from dangerous effects. What the bill does instead, however, is to erect new legal barriers which give preference to in-State beer, wine, and spirits wholesalers at the expense of free and open competition. With its broad sweep, the bill cedes Federal authority over licensing, labeling, advertising, taxation policy and other matters.

Under current Federal law, each and every State has authority to set its own law regarding the direct shipment of alcohol. A State can allow direct shipments to consumers, or a State can prohibit it. What a State cannot do, however, is to allow in-State producers to ship directly to consumers while barring out-of-State producers from doing so. This is a constitutional requirement, stated most recently in the case of *Granholm v. Heald*.

The House bill could not constitutionally alter this system. Instead, it would erect new legal barriers that would make it more difficult for out-of-State producers to enforce their rights to equal treatment under State laws.

I am very proud to say that my State of California is the fourth largest wine-producing region in the world. Our wine industry creates more than 330,000

jobs and contributes \$61.5 billion to the States economy each year.

We are not, however, alone. Nationwide, the coast-to-coast wine industry, active in all 50 States, has an economic impact of some \$122 billion annually.

And, in fact, 37 States and the District of Columbia currently allow direct shipment of wine from winemakers to consumers. Such laws increase choice for consumers. They also keep small wineries in business as wholesalers grow increasingly consolidated, offering less selection and squeezing out producers in the process.

As the joint resolution passed Monday, August 2, 2010, makes evident, H.R. 5034 threatens serious harm to winemakers in California and across the country, as well as to consumers and competition in these markets. Should it be introduced in the Senate or passed by the House, I will oppose it and will urge my colleagues to do the same.

TIBETAN REFUGEES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to call attention to language in Senate Report 111-237 accompanying the fiscal year 2011 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs appropriations bill, which passed out of the Appropriations Committee on July 29, 2010.

That language notes the committee's concern with recent events in Nepal, where Tibetan refugees have been forcibly turned over to Chinese border police. This contradicts Nepal's long and generous history of providing safe passage for Tibetans on route to India, and it is inconsistent with international law. In the past, Nepal has provided safe haven, and the United States, the United Nations, and other donors have provided the funds necessary to care for these people in transit.

This is a matter of grave concern to the Congress and to people everywhere who know of the danger of arrest and imprisonment and the physical hardships Tibetans face, fleeing their homeland by crossing the Himalayas with little more than the clothes on their backs. I hope the Nepali Government will take note of the committee's concern and take immediate steps to reaffirm its policy of permitting Tibetan refugees to travel safely to India.

I ask unanimous consent that this language in Report 111-237 be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

"Tibetan Refugees.—The Committee is concerned with recent actions by the Government of Nepal to prevent safe passage for Tibetan refugees, including reports that some fleeing Tibetans have been turned over to Chinese border authorities. The Committee urges the Government of Nepal to reaffirm its long tradition of permitting Tibetans to safely transit Nepal, and continues to support assistance for these refugees as well as Tibetans who have resettled in India."

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, today, the Children's Health Insurance Program turns 13. But instead of facing the difficulties of adolescence, CHIP is enjoying the advantages that come with being one of the most popular programs in the country.

I would like to take this moment to reflect on the history of CHIP and to think about the role that CHIP will play in the future.

Prior to 1997, kids of the working poor had nowhere to go to get health insurance. Their parents' employers didn't offer health insurance benefits, and the individual market offered only low-quality insurance options at unaffordable prices.

Without health insurance, kids couldn't see the doctor for a checkup, couldn't get a prescription for an earache, and couldn't get treatment for common chronic conditions like asthma. Unhealthy kids can't run and play, can't do well in school, and can't grow into healthy and productive adults.

In 1997, Congress took action to address this problem by establishing the Children's Health Insurance Program. And today, we celebrate 13 years of success—expanding high quality coverage to kids all across the country.

I would like to remind my colleagues of CHIP's history—its bipartisan roots and its tremendous success in achieving what we created the program to do: cover low-income, uninsured kids.

Congress enacted the Children's Health Insurance Program as a bipartisan compromise back in 1997, with leadership from Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator HATCH, and the late Senators Kennedy and Chafee. At that time, Members of Congress wanted to address the rising number of children without health insurance.

The Finance Committee reached a compromise that allowed States to set up Children's Health Insurance Programs that would meet their unique needs. CHIP is optional for States, but within just 2 years of its creation, all States decided to participate to address the health care needs of our country's most vulnerable children.

I am proud to have helped write and pass CHIP 13 years ago. It has been a tremendous success.

In its first decade, CHIP cut the number of uninsured children by more than a third. Today, more than 7½ million children get the doctor's visits and medicines they need to have a healthy childhood, enabling them to become healthy and productive adults.

After 10 years of success, CHIP came up for reauthorization in 2007. In the summer and fall of that year, Congress worked hard to pass a bipartisan reauthorization package. But President Bush vetoed it twice. Ultimately, we had to settle for an extension.

In January of 2009, with two of our former colleagues in the White House, I was thrilled to get started on a CHIP reauthorization bill as soon as possible.

Finally, the stars had aligned—President Obama was looking forward to signing the CHIP reauthorization bill, and the Congress was prepared to act. We were finally able to deliver what Americans had asked for—reestablishing kids' coverage as a national priority.

President Obama signed the bill on February 4, 2009. The new law maintained coverage for all children in the program at that time and started on a path to reach more than 4 million additional uninsured, low-income kids.

We had a couple of goals in mind as we drafted the CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2009.

We kept CHIP focused on low-income kids. We prioritized coverage of the lowest-income kids, but without limiting State flexibility in designing CHIP programs. We set up parameters to transition adults out of CHIP and into Medicaid or other appropriate coverage. And we also encouraged States to improve their outreach practices and streamline their enrollment procedures in order to reach all eligible kids.

We maintained State flexibility. We gave States the option to cover legal immigrant children and pregnant women during their first 5 years in America and receive the corresponding Federal match. We also created a State option that allows States to designate CHIP funds to offer premium assistance, helping families afford private coverage offered by employers or other sources.

And we improved the quality of care. The CHIP Reauthorization Act launched a substantial new initiative to improve children's health quality. This initiative invested \$45 million a year for 5 years to develop national core measures for children's health quality, improve data collection in CHIP and Medicaid, and promote the use of electronic health records.

The CHIP Reauthorization Act I helped to craft allowed us to cover as many uninsured low-income kids as possible. I made sure that we respected our budgetary limits, and made compromises in good faith with my Republican colleagues. In committee, further compromises were made which I hope strengthened the act even more.

The only disappointment that came out of the 2009 CHIP Reauthorization Act was that we weren't able to come to agreement with Senators GRASSLEY and HATCH, two colleagues that worked tirelessly to reauthorize CHIP in 2007. But I'm proud to say that CHIP's bipartisan reputation has not been marred.

Senators on both sides of the aisle continue to support CHIP and have even used it as a model for other programs. And I have continued to work with Senator GRASSLEY and all Senators on the Finance Committee overseeing the implementation of the CHIP Reauthorization Act.

A year and a half after enactment, more than half the States have taken advantage of the new coverage options in the CHIP Reauthorization Act, including 15 States that expanded income