

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

eligibility levels for CHIP or Medicaid to cover more kids. States have also taken advantage of the enrollment simplification options—making it easier for kids to get enrolled and stay covered.

In health reform, we extended CHIP for an additional 2 years, ensuring that kids will have a stable source of coverage as we expand coverage to other groups. In 2015, Congress will revisit CHIP in a new context. CHIP has been instrumental in providing children with access to care where none existed before, but it may need to take on a different role as health reform is implemented.

Whatever happens in 2015, I am confident that CHIP will continue to be an important part of our health system. CHIP is tried and true, and things just keep getting better and better in the program. As we celebrate CHIP's 13th birthday, we can be proud of everything Congress has done to provide low-income kids with high quality, affordable coverage.

TRIBUTE TO FIRST RESPONDERS

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I wish to discuss a heart wrenching tragedy that occurred in my home State earlier this week and to acknowledge the heroic efforts of our local first responders. On Monday evening, under sweltering temperatures that had surpassed 100 degrees, two Shreveport families gathered on the banks of the Red River, in Shreveport, LA, to enjoy a picnic. What is normally a routine summer outing for millions of people across America quickly turned into a disaster.

Seven teenage children from these two families had wandered off into an unfamiliar part of the river. One of the children stepped off of a sand bar and into deeper, more dangerous water and began to scream for help. The other six children followed in an attempt to rescue the drowning teen. None of the seven children knew how to swim, nor did the adults who were with them. As the seven children struggled for their lives against the treacherous waters of the Red River, witnesses called 911 for help.

Teams of first responders from Shreveport and Bossier City were dispatched and arrived on the scene at 6:30 p.m., roughly 10 minutes after the 911 call was made. Dive teams entered the water four at a time in search of the drowning children. Despite the tremendous efforts of the divers, the river's waters claimed the lives of six of the seven children. The lone survivor was rescued by a bystander named Christopher Partlan, before the dive teams could get to the area.

At 7:51 p.m., the first of the victim's bodies was recovered from the water. This unthinkable task continued for more than 2 hours before the last of the victims was recovered at 10:02 p.m.

At this time, I would like to read the names of the first responders from

Shreveport and Bossier City who were dispatched to this tragic accident:

Captain John Davis; Fire Engineer Craig Bynog; Firefighter Jared Mourad; Firefighter Chad Alexander; Battalion Chief Tim Thames; and Fire Engineer Jimmy Lockey of the Shreveport Fire Department. Officer Phillip Tucker of the Shreveport Police Department; Fire Driver Chad Arnette of the Bossier City Fire Department; and Christopher Partlan, the bystander who rescued 15-year-old DeKendrix Warner.

All these brave men deserve to be recognized for their heroism. First responders in Shreveport and Bossier and in cities and towns across America protect our communities every day. We depend on them during fires, floods and other disasters and they put their lives on the line to save ours. For that, we owe them a debt of honor and gratitude.

I would also like once again to send my condolences to the Warner and Stewart families for their tragic loss. I know the Shreveport community will wrap its arms around them and pray for them, comfort them and support them during this difficult time.

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an important matter involving the future of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

As you may know, TVA is led by a Board of Directors that consists of nine individuals appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. These board members serve for staggered 5-year terms.

For some time, it has been understood that each State within TVA's service area should be represented on the board. This makes sense given TVA's diverse energy production and economic development activities, which affect communities in each State differently as do the Authority's various power plants and dams.

Recognizing this, President Bush, in 2006, nominated to the board a fabulous individual from my State, Howard Thrailkill. The Senate confirmed the nomination unanimously.

Mr. Thrailkill has undoubtedly served with distinction. He was president of AdTran, a successful technology company in Huntsville, and he brought to TVA a familiarity with the complexities of running a large organization.

Upon his confirmation, Mr. Thrailkill immersed himself in the financial records, business plans, and technical data surrounding TVA's many functions. He became an expert on the organization in a way that many board members do not. When he identified a poor performing project or a proposal with downsides, he was not afraid to say so. And he was especially familiar with TVA's activities in North Alabama, where he lived.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Thrailkill's willingness to devote his personal time and

energy to the position was of great benefit to both TVA and its Alabama customers.

Unfortunately, Mr. Thrailkill's term on the Board is now nearing its end. I was dismayed to learn recently that President Obama apparently failed to recognize the importance of this position to the people of Alabama, and had nominated an individual from another State to fill it.

This is no small matter. Of the seven States that make up TVA, Alabama is the second largest in terms of revenue, the second largest in terms of employees, and the third largest in terms of service area.

Also, Alabama is home to several important TVA facilities, such as Guntersville Hydroelectric Dam, Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, and the Bellefonte facility—which could become one of the first new nuclear power plants in the country.

Seven States make up the TVA service area. There are nine seats on the board. It is unacceptable that Alabama's long term representation be put in jeopardy.

Accordingly, I have been forced to use my position in the Senate to block the progress of these TVA nominations until this matter could be resolved.

I am pleased to inform the Senate today that after a series of conversations with the White House, we have reached an agreement that the next opening on the board will be filled by a nominee from the State of Alabama.

That vacancy is expected in March of next year, and we have agreed to begin in the next month discussing which individuals should be considered for this important position. I wish to thank the President and his staff for working with me on this compromise.

Senator CARPER, who chairs the Environment and Public Works subcommittee that considers TVA nominations, has also stated his willingness to begin consideration of the Alabama nominee early to ensure he or she is confirmed before the start of the term. I thank him for that offer.

I am pleased we could reach an agreement on this issue, and I look forward to the Senate confirmation of an individual from my State who will offer strong leadership to TVA in the coming years.

Accordingly, I am also pleased today to lift my hold on the nominations to the TVA Board that are currently pending in the Senate. I urge my colleagues to move quickly with the nominations to ensure that the Board of Directors will have a quorum in August so that it may effectively conduct the business before it.

1099 REPORTING REQUIREMENT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise to express my concerns about a provision in the new health care law that will impose monumental burdens on small businesses, reduce wages and eliminate jobs.