

including \$360 million owed to the United States. Argentina's willingness to pay its debts to the Paris Club demonstrates its capacity to go further and compensate private American creditors, who have been trying to collect outstanding debt from Argentina for years. The fact that Argentina has agreed to pay its public debts to other sovereign nations is a welcomed first step. However, private U.S. creditors are still owed billions of dollars.

As I mentioned before in this Chamber, these private creditors have won over 100 U.S. Federal court judgments against Argentina. Now that Argentina has shown that it can and will pay its debts through the Paris Club negotiations, the administration should work to get this issue resolved for the remaining American bondholders and taxpayers.

I hope my colleagues will join me in urging the administration to protect the well-being of the American citizens impacted by Argentina's failure to pay its debts.

Rx IMPACT DAY

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I rise today in advance of the Third Annual National Association of Chain Drug Stores RxIMPACT Day to recognize pharmacy contributions to the American health care system. Over the course of the next 2 days, over 300 members of the pharmacy community, including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, State pharmacy leaders and pharmacy company executives, will visit Capitol Hill to share their views with Congress about the importance of protecting access to neighborhood pharmacies and utilizing pharmacists to improve quality and reduce health costs.

Pharmacists play an important role in improving our health care system by providing services and expertise that help patients manage their medications and overall health. In many communities, pharmacists are the most accessible health care provider group. Today's pharmacies offer a variety of preventive healthcare services including immunizations and vaccinations, health screening services, disease management services and routine advice on the best and most effective over-the-counter products for patients' specific needs.

Through medication therapy management, MTM, pharmacists reduce medical errors and help patients manage and adhere to their prescribed therapies. Drug therapy management services can play a critical role in improving the quality of care and containing health care costs, as these services help patients make the best possible use of their medications. MTM services require a partnership of the pharmacist, the patient or their caregiver, and other health professionals to promote the safe and effective use of medications and help patients achieve targeted health outcomes. I am pleased

the Affordable Care Act recognized the health benefits and cost savings associated with MTM and includes a series of grant programs to encourage MTM as part of coordinated care models and chronic disease initiatives. Reform also improves the MTM benefit in Medicare Part D and establishes a bonus payment for Medicare Advantage plans that promote MTM.

Analysis conducted by the New England Healthcare Institute estimates that the overall cost of incorrect use of medication is as much as \$290 billion per year, not to mention the avoidable loss of quality of life for patients and their loved ones. With increasing evidence this benefit can improve patient health outcomes, I support community pharmacy's efforts to strengthen the MTM benefit. I joined colleagues earlier this year in introducing the Medication Therapy Management Empowerment Act. In addition to extending MTM services to seniors and others struggling with chronic conditions, this bill provides appropriate reimbursement for pharmacists' time and service. The bill also establishes standards for data collection to evaluate and improve the Part D MTM benefit.

Throughout my service in Congress, I have been a strong supporter of pharmacies and recognize their important role in our health care system. Today, I celebrate the value of pharmacy and support efforts to protect access to neighborhood pharmacies and utilize pharmacies to improve the quality and reduce the costs of health care. I commend pharmacy leaders, pharmacists, students, and executives and the pharmacy community for their contributions to improving the health of the American people.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise today, March 8, to celebrate International Women's Day, on which we honor the economic, political, and social achievements of women in Colorado and across the world. It also happens to be the 100-year anniversary of International Women's Day. For 100 years, diverse nations have spoken as one to honor the achievements of women and look forward hopefully to a future with greater economic opportunities for all women, including my three daughters, Caroline, Halina, and Anne.

I would like to celebrate today by discussing ways that we can build toward that future and create better economic opportunities for women in all countries—from Afghanistan to Zambia, two countries which, incidentally, celebrate International Women's Day as an official holiday.

All too often, in many developing countries, women represent a disproportionate number of the poor. According to the United Nations Development Program, women represent 60 percent of the 1.4 billion people living on less than \$1.25 a day. They also lack

access to the same educational and health services as men. For example, two-thirds of the world's illiterate people are women.

These disparities are stark, and their causes are the product of historical second-class citizenship for women. Such historical disadvantages are pervasive and systemic. Only with the determined effort of the international community can we begin to break down these barriers and foster true economic opportunities for women.

Many women and girls are trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty because of their limited access to basic financial services. Women often manage the household and produce food for the entire family, but they are unable to save money, protect against calamity, or obtain a small loan—simple banking tools you and I take for granted.

For example, 75 percent of the world's women cannot obtain formal bank loans, partly because they lack permanent employment, capital, and assets, such as land. In some countries, like Burkina Faso, laws do not specifically discriminate against women, but they do establish landowner criteria that effectively exclude women.

One way to bridge this gap is to connect women with access to financial services and microfinance. Very small loans can help some women start and expand small businesses. Others need a safe place to store money as they save for school fees and health care services for their children. Some small businesswomen and female heads of households wish to purchase simple forms of insurance to protect against unexpected illnesses, which can often wipe a family out. By increasing women's access to such basic financial services, we can help countless women weather unexpected storms and gain agency over their economic well-being.

Creating economic and financial opportunities for women worldwide is the right thing to do, and it is also the smart thing to do. In countries like Pakistan and Yemen, supporting women can lead to measurable progress in the economic success of families and the direction of tomorrow's youth. In sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, these efforts can help small-scale, subsistence farmers, most of whom are women, prevent future food crises and help stabilize struggling democracies.

Mr. President and all other Members here today, please join me in celebrating International Women's Day by supporting efforts to expand economic opportunities for women around the world.

TEACHING GEOGRAPHY IS FUNDAMENTAL ACT

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act, introduced by Senator COCHRAN and myself last week. Increasing geography literacy is essential to STEM education, and investing in our children's science

education is essential to making America smarter and more innovative. This bill would authorize the Secretary of Education to meet that critical need by doling out competitive grants to proven nonprofits with a track record of promoting geography literacy in our schools through activities such as teacher professional development and research. As chairwoman of the appropriation subcommittee that funds National Science Foundation, NSF, I have directed National Science Foundation's education team to work with experts like National Geographic to strengthen geography education. NSF is now working with National Geographic Society to explore new ways to improve geography teaching, training, and research in our schools. This pilot program has proven successful and deserves national support.

For a number of years, I have promoted geography locally in my home State of Maryland by working with geographic trailblazers like National Geographic Society's Chesapeake watershed education programs and Pat Noonan's Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy—bringing real-time environmental information to Maryland schoolchildren in a meaningful and understandable way. I can tell that making geography education local is where to start. Hook a child's interest with what they know, and their geographic knowledge will open up to the rest of the world.

I strongly support this bill because I know it can enhance tremendous work already being done. National Geographic is a great example of an organization that could partner with the Department of Education to provide schools with the intellectual and organizational capacity to effectively teach geography literacy. It is an institution whose members have explored the world's tallest peaks and discovered our ocean's deepest depths. They support exploration and discovery—from Peary and Hanson's expedition to the North Pole in 1906 to Ballard's discovery of the Titanic in 1985. But they also fund geography education programming through grants to educational organizations and by providing professional development to classroom teachers. Their magazine alone has an incredible impact because of its loyal and massive readership of more than 360 million people. There is no need for the administration to reinvent the wheel when there are willing geographic partners ready and willing to take this Teaching Geography is Fundamental bill and run with it.

We live in an age when our innovative economy is becoming ever more global and new cyber technology connects schoolchildren not only to their friend across the street but to their friend across the ocean. Better geography literacy at a young age—along with an understanding and appreciation of other cultures—is so important nowadays. I think it is both fitting and appropriate that we continue to en-

courage that curiosity with our children, and this bill helps us get there. That is why I am proud to cosponsor this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to support it as well.

NOTICE OF ISSUANCE

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, the following regulations were printed in the RECORD on January 25, 2011. Due to errors in the initial printing, I ask unanimous consent that the notice be reprinted in the RECORD.

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

OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE TEXT OF REGULATIONS FOR THE VETERANS EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 1998

When approved by the House of Representatives for the House of Representatives, these regulations will have the prefix "H." When approved by the Senate for the Senate, these regulations will have the prefix "S." When approved by Congress for the other employing offices covered by the CAA, these regulations will have the prefix "C."

In this draft, "H&S Regs" denotes the provisions that would be included in the regulations applicable to be made applicable to the House and Senate, and "C Reg" denotes the provisions that would be included in the regulations to be made applicable to other employing offices.

PART 1—Extension of Rights and Protections Relating to Veterans' Preference Under Title 5, United States Code, to Covered Employees of the Legislative Branch (section 4(c) of the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998)

Subpart A—Matters of General Applicability to All Regulations Promulgated under Section 4 of the VEOA

Sec.

1.101 Purpose and scope.

1.102 Definitions.

1.103 Adoption of regulations.

1.104 Coordination with section 225 of the Congressional Accountability Act.

SEC. 1.101. PURPOSE AND SCOPE.

(a) Section 4(c) of the VEOA. The Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA) applies the rights and protections of sections 2108, 3309 through 3312, and subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 5 U.S.C., to certain covered employees within the Legislative branch.

(b) Purpose of regulations. The regulations set forth herein are the substantive regulations that the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance has promulgated pursuant to section 4(c)(4) of the VEOA, in accordance with the rulemaking procedure set forth in section 304 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1384). The purpose of subparts B, C and D of these regulations is to define veterans' preference and the administration of veterans' preference as applicable to Federal employment in the Legislative branch. (5 U.S.C. §2108, as applied by the VEOA). The purpose of subpart E of these regulations is to ensure that the principles of the veterans' preference laws are integrated into the existing employment and retention policies and processes of those employing offices with employees covered by the VEOA, and to provide for transparency in the application of veterans' preference in covered appointment and retention decisions. Provided, nothing in these regulations shall be construed so as to require an employing office to reduce any existing veterans' preference rights and protections that

it may afford to preference eligible individuals.

H Regs: (c) Scope of Regulations. The definition of "covered employee" in Section 4(c) of the VEOA limits the scope of the statute's applicability within the Legislative branch. The term "covered employee" excludes any employee: (1) whose appointment is made by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate; (2) whose appointment is made by a Member of Congress within an employing office, as defined by Sec. 101(9)(A-C) of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §1301(9)(A-C) or; (3) whose appointment is made by a committee or subcommittee of either House of Congress or a joint committee of the House of Representatives and the Senate; or (4) who is appointed to a position, the duties of which are equivalent to those of a Senior Executive Service position (within the meaning of section 3132(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code). Accordingly, these regulations shall not apply to any employing office that only employs individuals excluded from the definition of covered employee.

S Regs: (c) Scope of Regulations. The definition of "covered employee" in Section 4(c) of the VEOA limits the scope of the statute's applicability within the Legislative branch. The term "covered employee" excludes any employee: (1) whose appointment is made by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate; (2) whose appointment is made or directed by a Member of Congress within an employing office, as defined by Sec. 101(9)(A-C) of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §1301(9)(A-C) or; (3) whose appointment is made by a committee or subcommittee of either House of Congress or a joint committee of the House of Representatives and the Senate; (4) who is appointed pursuant to section 105(a) of the Second Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1978; or (5) who is appointed to a position, the duties of which are equivalent to those of a Senior Executive Service position (within the meaning of section 3132(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code). Accordingly, these regulations shall not apply to any employing office that only employs individuals excluded from the definition of covered employee.

C Regs: (c) Scope of Regulations. The definition of "covered employee" in Section 4(c) of the VEOA limits the scope of the statute's applicability within the Legislative branch. The term "covered employee" excludes any employee: (1) whose appointment is made by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate; (2) whose appointment is made by a Member of Congress or by a committee or subcommittee of either House of Congress or a joint committee of the House of Representatives and the Senate; or (3) who is appointed to a position, the duties of which are equivalent to those of a Senior Executive Service position (within the meaning of section 3132(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code). Accordingly, these regulations shall not apply to any employing office that only employs individuals excluded from the definition of covered employee.

SEC. 1.102. DEFINITIONS.

Except as otherwise provided in these regulations, as used in these regulations:

(a) "Accredited physician" means a doctor of medicine or osteopathy who is authorized to practice medicine or surgery (as appropriate) by the State in which the doctor practices. The phrase "authorized to practice by the State" as used in this section means that the provider must be authorized to diagnose and treat physical or mental health conditions without supervision by a doctor or other health care provider.

(b) "Act" or "CAA" means the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, as amended (Pub. L. 104-1, 109 Stat. 3, 2 U.S.C. §§1301-1438).