

everything better. But the important aspect is no one who is opposing the reauthorization of this bill right now is opposed to autism research or the ideas behind it. What we are opposed to is tying the hands of the researchers and the Directors at NIH and telling them what they should do and how they should do it.

I would also dispute the fact the money will go away. The CR we are going to consider this week will continue this funding at the level it is until November 18, which gives us plenty of time to work with Senator MENENDEZ to work out some of our problems with this piece of legislation. So we come to this debate in good faith. We recognize the emotional ties associated with such a devastating disease. As an obstetrician and pediatrician, I have diagnosed it. I have treated it. I have sat with the families as they have suffered through the consequences of this disease. I don't take it lightly. But I also don't take lightly our inability to make the clear choices and ratchet around the moneys for the NIH.

What we should do is say: NIH, here is your money. Go where the science helps the most people in the quickest way and where the science leads us. At a time when our country is desperate to get our fiscal house in order, what we want is the most efficient NIH. What we want is nonduplicative grants at the NIH. What we want is no fraud in the grants associated with autism, which have been published and which people are now in jail for. We want that eliminated. We want the oversight on the NIH to be across the board in every area. Are they doing what we are asking them to do to spend the money wisely and what the science would tell them to do, not what any one particular interest group would tell them to do?

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1094, the Combating Autism Reauthorization Act, and that my amendment at the desk related to requiring the Secretary of HHS to identify and consolidate duplicative and overlapping autism funding throughout the Federal Government be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. COBURN. I understand that. My commitment is to work with the Senator from New Jersey to try to solve this problem before any funding would change, and I don't think it is going to change.

I would also note for my colleagues that last year we had over \$450 billion appropriated by the appropriators that

was not authorized for anything. There were no authorizations at all. So this money isn't going to go away. There is no hurry. There is no tragedy. We can continue, and we can work as colleagues to try to solve our problems as well as meet the demands the Senator from New Jersey thinks must be met.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. First of all, I appreciate my colleague's offer and certainly we will take him up on it—to have a discussion to see if we can come to a common understanding because the issue is far more important than anyone's ideological views. I look forward to working with him and others who are concerned.

Let me say, however, there are some inconsistencies. If you do not believe there should be a disease-specific reauthorization, then the CR does exactly that. It will be for a more limited time, but it will, in fact, reauthorize this bill but only to November 18. So whether that debate is about reauthorizing a disease-specific allocation, which is what I was trying to accomplish, or whether in the CR, I assume it will be the thinking of my colleagues to object to the CR on the basis it has a disease-specific reauthorization for a much smaller period of time, until November 18. I am not quite sure how that logic follows at the end of the day.

Secondly, I think it is rather cruel to use an analogy that talks about loan guarantees to some energy entity and talking about autism and families. When I hear the word "lobby," that, of course, creates a pejorative description. What is the lobby here? The lobby here is parents—American citizens, husbands and wives, taxpayers who advocate for their children before their representatives. I thought, in a representative democracy, citizens have the right to go to their elected representatives and advocate for a point of view—even if, admittedly, that point of view is on behalf of the welfare of their child.

So I have a problem when I hear, in this context, the word "lobby," as if it is a negative when a universe of parents in our country who pay taxes are simply trying to accomplish getting their government's attention on a disease that afflicts their children and their ability to function in this society to the maximum potential their God-given abilities give them. I don't care about listening to a lobby. The last time I checked, this is what democracy is all about.

Finally, I would simply say there is no guarantee—I know my colleague suggested there is a guarantee—that research into autism will continue. There is no guarantee of that. There is no guarantee of that. The reason why I objected to the other unanimous consent by my colleague from Oklahoma is because, in fact, we have a set of circumstances, if we read that unanimous consent request, where there would be

a diminution of funds at the end of the day. So we either believe in a disease-specific reauthorization, which to some degree would be allowed, but then we take away all the funds.

The whole reason this legislation came to being was to coordinate the very efforts of the Federal Government together to, in essence, meet the challenge of autism.

Even when we listen to debate on disease-specific legislation and the opposition to disease-specific legislation, I would emphasize that while the name would suggest this is only about autism, this improves services for children with many different developmental disorders and conditions—from autism, yes, but Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, intellectual disabilities, and epilepsy.

So it is a program that involves a number of efforts, broadly based, to prevent and detect and improve the health infrastructure for all children who might face any of these developmental disabilities, not just autism.

Every year this program trains thousands of professionals to better care for individuals with a broad range of developmental disabilities, including but not limited to autism spectrum disorders. Given the long waiting lists that families often endure to receive diagnostic and treatment services, these programs are essential in addressing an urgent national health need.

So, Mr. President, I don't quite understand the opposition. It boggles my mind. They are against disease-specific legislation even though this has passed by voice vote in the past? Even though this passed unanimously out of the committee? Even though a disease-specific provision will be in the CR, which I assume they would oppose if they don't want legislation to move forward? Then they tell families they are lobbyists, and they have no right to lobby, that we shouldn't listen to their voices? Then they say there will be—don't worry, there will be money for research, when there is no guarantee? That is cruel, in my view, and there is no reason for it.

I would only hope we can have a change of heart so we can have families who have an incredible challenge and who love their children and want to do everything they can to help them fulfill the maximum of their potential to be able to do so. That is what we have done for several years now under this legislation.

My God, if we can't get things like this passed, I don't know where we are headed in the Senate. But I hope for a better day, and I am going to continue and insist until we achieve this.

I yield the floor.

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:47 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m., and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. WEBB).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

#### PALESTINIAN U.N. REQUEST

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to bring to the attention of my colleagues activities that will take place this week in New York at the United Nations and the request that has been made by the Palestinians that they seek status as an independent state with full membership in the United Nations.

It is clearly the position of the United States, it is clearly I think the position of the international community, that there needs to be two states, a Jewish State of Israel along with an independent Palestinian State, living side by side in peace. But the only way that will take place is through direct negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis. Prime Minister Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, was here in Washington and spoke before a joint session of Congress. He laid out very clearly how peace in the Middle East needs to evolve, through the recognition by the international community of the Jewish State of Israel and an independent Palestinian State through direct negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Israel has been one of our strongest allies. They have been a loyal ally to the United States. We share common values. It is strategically critical to the United States, particularly in that part of the world. It is clear to all that the only way we will achieve the two states will be through direct negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis. The Palestinians have been reluctant to have these direct negotiations and tried to use intermediaries. They need to do it directly. Sit down with the Israelis. Negotiate the issues. That is the way to move forward to accomplish their goal.

The action they are seeking in the United Nations will be counterproductive. We have gone on record, every single one of us in the Senate of the United States, in S. Res. 185, a resolution I brought forward with my colleague from Maine, Senator COLLINS. It was passed unanimously by the Senate. It stated very clearly that if the Palestinians were to pursue this unilateral action through the United Nations, that would not advance the peace process, that it would be counterproductive to the objectives of the Palestinians to establish an independent state.

This past week, Senator COLLINS and I sent a letter to President Abbas, the President of the Palestinian group. We

told him that we believed trying to go directly to the United Nations, circumventing the peace process, would be a lack of good faith in peace negotiations and that it would have repercussions on United States foreign policy.

What we have been told by the Palestinians is they will seek full membership as a state in the United Nations, going to the Security Council. That is not going to succeed. We hope the Security Council will recognize the inappropriateness of such action and will not take it up or will not provide the necessary support to forward it to the General Assembly. In the unlikely case that it were to get the necessary support in the Security Council, the United States has made it clear that it would veto any such action, for good reason—because it would be counterproductive to achieving the objectives of two states living side by side in peace.

The Palestinians may go to the General Assembly. Although they cannot get full membership, they could try to advance a resolution within the General Assembly in the United Nations. We know the numbers. We know what could happen. But I must tell you, seeking some form of recognition through the General Assembly, circumventing the peace process and the Security Council, will be harmful to advancing the peace process and the objectives of the Palestinians for an independent state.

Let the parties negotiate directly, in good faith. Israel has indicated they are prepared to do that. We have been prepared to do that—negotiate in good faith through direct negotiations. There are no shortcuts to achieving this. Moving through the United Nations will not achieve those objectives. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Nevada.

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

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

#### NEVADA TRAGEDIES

Mr. HELLER. It is an honor serving the people of the great State of Nevada, and today I am speaking on their behalf for the first time in the Chamber of the Senate. Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to reflect on two tragic events that have taken place in Nevada recently.

In Carson City, our Nation lost three Nevada National Guard members at a local restaurant shooting. Those members were MAJ Heath Kelly, SFC Miranda McElhiney, and SFC Christian Riege.

The other was the horrific crash at the Reno air races this weekend. As with the shootings in Carson City, this

terrible event not only impacted the communities in northern Nevada but the entire State and the Nation. Having visited the scene where the crash occurred, it is difficult to describe the amount of damage that took place there.

Our State's first responders and medical personnel did an amazing job in a very difficult situation. My thoughts and prayers go out to all the victims and their families, and I wish the injured a quick recovery.

#### REENERGIZING AMERICA

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I am deeply humbled by the opportunity to stand here today and to address the body as Nevada's 25th Senator. Nevada is a small State, but it is one that has provided many with a great chance to succeed. Most people know that it was in Nevada where Samuel Clemens began to sign his writings as Mark Twain and reported on the territorial legislative sessions. However, the reason Samuel Clemens came to the Nevada territory was to follow his older brother, Orion Clemens, who served as the first and only secretary of the Nevada Territory. That position would later become secretary of state, a position which I held prior to my service in Congress.

Similar to the Clemens brothers who sought greater opportunities, it is in a State such as Nevada where a son of a mechanic can have the opportunity to interact with those who are responsible for governing the State. For instance, as a boy I delivered the newspaper to then-Gov. Mike O'Callaghan. For a time, I went to Sunday school with then-Lt. Gov. HARRY REID's sons, and I was educated at the same public high school as Senator Paul Laxalt. Our current Governor, Brian Sandoval, is someone whom I used to play organized basketball with. I wish to thank Senator Laxalt for his support and Senator REID for being here today. I also wish to thank Senator MCCONNELL for being here as well.

My father's automotive shop was across the street from the Nevada State legislature, so many of the legislators would come into my dad's business. I spent a lot of time there as a kid working in that garage, sweeping floors, repairing cars, fixing engines and transmissions. In that shop, I learned the value of hard work and responsibility and the importance of family.

I am proud of what I learned growing up in Nevada: values from two great parents, good teachers, and good neighbors. Nevada values such as faith in God, hard work, honesty, and commitment to family—these are the values I try to bring to Washington, DC, every day.

Although Nevada has changed over the years, in many ways it is very much the same place as when I grew up. I bring this up because I recall what it took for my father to keep his