



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 106th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 146

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2000

No. 4

Senate

The Senate met at 8:30 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore, STROM THURMOND, a Senator from the State of South Carolina.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Lloyd J. Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, Sovereign of this Nation, Lord of our lives, and the source of our unity, we meet together in preparation for joining the Members of the House of Representatives for the State of the Union Address by our President. Bless him as he speaks and the Members of Congress as they listen. Draw us up to You by Your majesty, to one another by shared patriotism, and to the challenges ahead by mutual commitment to discern and do what is best for America, In Your holy name. Amen.

⌘

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CHUCK HAGEL, a Senator from the State of Nebraska, led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

⌘

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able majority leader is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Senate will momentarily proceed as a body to the Hall of the House of Representatives to hear the President's State of the Union Address. However, we have a few housekeeping items to consider prior to our departure.

⌘

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PROVIDING THAT THE TWO HOUSES OF CONGRESS ASSEMBLE FOR THE PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now

proceed to House concurrent resolution 241 authorizing the address for this evening.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 241) that the two Houses of Congress assemble in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Thursday, January 27, 2000, at 9 p.m., for the purpose of receiving such communication as the President of the United States shall be pleased to make to them.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 241) was agreed to.

⌘

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President of the Senate be authorized to appoint a committee on the part of the Senate to join with a like committee on the part of the House of Representatives to escort the President of the United States into the House Chamber for the joint session to be held at 9 p.m. this evening, Thursday, January 27, 2000.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

⌘

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2006

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk due for its second reading. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a second time and an objection having been heard for further consideration.

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

⌘

PROGRAM

Mr. LOTT. As a reminder to Members, the Senate will not be in session on Friday. We will reconvene Monday at 12 noon, and at 2 p.m. resume consideration of the bankruptcy bill. Several amendments are scheduled to be debated; however, no votes will occur during Monday's session of the Senate. The next votes will occur on Tuesday at a time to be determined by the two leaders. I emphasize that there will be votes on Tuesday. We will notify Members as to the time some time during the day on Monday.

I yield the floor so that Members can assemble to proceed to the House of Representatives.

⌘

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session, the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States, transmitting a nomination, which was referred to the appropriate committee.

(The nomination received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

⌘

REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE UNION MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 78

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was ordered to lie on the table:

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, honored guests,

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S107

my fellow Americans: We are fortunate to be alive at this moment in history. Never before has our nation enjoyed, at once, so much prosperity and social progress with so little internal crisis or so few external threats. Never before have we had such a blessed opportunity—and, therefore, such a profound obligation—to build the more perfect union of our founders' dreams.

We begin the new century with over 20 million new jobs. The fastest economic growth in more than 30 years; the lowest unemployment rates in 30 years; the lowest poverty rates in 20 years; the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates on record; the first back-to-back budget surpluses in 42 years.

Next month, America will achieve the longest period of economic growth in our entire history.

We have built a new economy.

Our economic revolution has been matched by a revival of the American spirit: Crime down by 20 percent, to its lowest level in 25 years. Teen births down seven years in a row and adoptions up by 30 percent. Welfare rolls cut in half to their lowest levels in 30 years.

My fellow Americans, the state of our Union is the strongest it has ever been.

As always, the credit belongs to the American people.

My gratitude also goes to those of you in this chamber who have worked with us to put progress above partisanship.

Eight years ago, it was not so clear to most Americans there would be much to celebrate in the year 2000. Then our nation was gripped by economic distress, social decline, political gridlock. The title of a best-selling book asked: "America: What went wrong?" In the best traditions of our nation, Americans determined to set things right. We restored the vital center, replacing outdated ideologies with a new vision anchored in basic, enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Americans.

We reinvented government, transforming it into a catalyst for new ideas that stress both opportunity and responsibility, and give our people the tools to solve their own problems.

With the smallest federal workforce in 40 years, we turned record deficits into record surpluses, and doubled our investment in education. We cut crime: with 100,000 community police and the Brady Law, which has kept guns out of the hands of half a million criminals.

We ended welfare as we knew it—requiring work while protecting health care and nutrition for children, and investing more in child care, transportation, and housing to help their parents go to work. We have helped parents to succeed at work and at home—with family leave, which 20 million Americans have used to care for a newborn child or a sick loved one. We have engaged 150,000 young Americans in

citizen service through AmeriCorps—while also helping them earn their way through college.

In 1992, we had a roadmap. Today, we have results. More important, American again has the confidence to dream big dreams. But we must not let our renewed confidence grow into complacency. We will be judged by the dreams and deeds we pass on to our children. And on that score, we will be held to a high standard, indeed. Because our chance to do good is so great.

My fellow Americans, we have crossed the bridge we built to the 21st Century. Now, we must shape a 21st-Century American revolution—of opportunity, responsibility, and community. We must be, as we were in the beginning, a new nation.

At the dawn of the last century, Theodore Roosevelt said, "the one characteristic more essential than any other is foresight . . . It should be the growing nation with a future which takes the long look ahead." Tonight let us take our look long ahead—and set great goals for our nation.

To 21st Century America, let us pledge that: Every child will begin school ready to learn and graduate ready to succeed. Every family will be able to succeed at home and at work—and no child will be raised in poverty. We will meet the challenge of the aging of America. We will assure quality, affordable healthcare for all Americans. We will make America the safest big country on Earth. We will bring prosperity to every American community. We will reverse the course of climate change and leave a cleaner, safer planet. America will lead the world toward shared peace and prosperity, and the far frontiers of science and technology. And we will become at last what our founders pledged us to be so long ago—one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

These are great goals, worthy of a great nation. We will not reach them all this year. Not even in this decade. But we will reach them. Let us remember that the first American revolution was not won with a single shot. The continent was not settled in a single year. The lesson of our history—and the lesson of the last seven years—is that great goals are reached step by step: always building on our progress, always gaining ground.

Of course, you can't gain ground if you're standing still. For too long this Congress has been standing still on some of our most pressing national priorities. Let's begin with them.

I ask you again to pass a real patient's bill of rights. Pass common-sense gun-safety legislation. Pass campaign finance reform. Vote on long overdue judicial nominations and other important appointees. And, again, I ask you to raise the minimum wage.

Two years ago, as we reached our first balanced budget, I asked that we meet our responsibility to the next generation by maintaining our fiscal discipline. Because we refused to stray

from that path, we are doing something that would have seemed unimaginable seven years ago: We are actually paying down the national debt. If we stay on this path, we can pay down the debt entirely in 13 years and make America debt-free for the first time since Andrew Jackson was president in 1835.

In 1993, we began to put our fiscal house in order with the Deficit Reduction Act, winning passage in both houses by just one vote. Your former colleague, my first Secretary of the Treasury, led that effort. He is here tonight. Lloyd Bentsen, you have served America well.

Beyond paying off the debt, we must ensure that the benefits of debt reduction go to preserving two of the most important guarantees we make to every American—Social Security and Medicare. I ask you tonight to work with me to make a bipartisan down payment on Social Security reform by crediting the interest savings from debt reduction to the Social Security Trust Fund to ensure that it is strong and sound for the next 50 years.

But this is just the start of our journey. Now we must take the right steps toward reaching our great goals.

OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN EDUCATION

First and foremost, we need a 21st Century revolution in education, guided by our faith that every child can learn. Because education is more than ever the key to our children's future, we must make sure all our children have that key. That means quality preschool and afterschool, the best trained teachers in every classroom, and college opportunities for all our children.

For seven years, we have worked hard to improve our schools, with opportunity and responsibility: Investing more, but demanding more in return.

Reading, math, and college entrance scores are up. And some of the most impressive gains are in schools in poor neighborhoods.

All successful schools have followed the same proven formula: higher standards, more accountability, so all children can reach those standards. I have sent Congress a reform plan based on that formula. It holds states and school districts accountable for progress, and rewards them for results. Each year, the national government invests more than \$15 billion in our schools. It's time to support what works and stop supporting what doesn't.

As we demand more than ever from our schools, we should invest more than ever in our schools.

Let's double our investments to help states and districts turn around their worst-performing schools—or shut them down.

Let's double our investment in afterschool and summer school programs—boosting achievement, and keeping children off the street and out of trouble. If we do, we can give every child in every failing school in America the chance to meet high standards.

Since 1993, we've nearly doubled our investment in Head Start and improved its quality. Tonight, I ask for another \$1 billion to Head Start, the largest increase in the program's history.

We know that children learn best in smaller classes with good teachers. For two years in a row, Congress has supported my plan to hire 100,000 new, qualified teachers, to lower class sizes in the early grades. This year, I ask you to make it three in a row.

And to make sure all teachers know the subjects they teach, tonight I propose a new teacher quality initiative—to recruit more talented people into the classroom, reward good teachers for staying there, and give all teachers the training they need.

We know charter schools provide real public school choice. When I became President, there was just one independent public charter school in all America. Today there are 1,700. I ask you to help us meet our goal of 3,000 by next year.

We know we must connect all our classrooms to the Internet. We're getting there. In 1994, only three percent of our classrooms were connected. Today, with the help of the Vice President's E-rate program, more than half of them are; and 90 percent of our schools have at least one connection to the Internet.

But we can't finish the job when a third of all schools are in serious disrepair, many with walls and wires too old for the Internet. Tonight, I propose to help 5,000 schools a year make immediate, urgent repairs. And again, to help build or modernize 6,000 schools, to get students out of trailers and into high-tech classrooms.

We should double our bipartisan GEAR UP program to mentor 1.4 million disadvantaged young people for college. And let's offer these students a chance to take the same college test-prep courses wealthier students use to boost their test scores.

To make the American Dream achievable for all, we must make college affordable for all. For seven years, on a bipartisan basis, we have taken action toward that goal: larger Pell grants, more-affordable student loans, education IRAs, and our HOPE scholarships, which have already benefited 5 million young people. 67 percent of high school graduates now go on to college, up almost 10 percent since 1993. Yet millions of families still strain to pay college tuition. They need help.

I propose a landmark \$30-billion college opportunity tax cut—a middle-class tax deduction for up to \$10,000 in college tuition costs. We've already made two years of college affordable for all. Now let's make four years of college affordable for all.

If we take all these steps, we will move a long way toward making sure every child starts school ready to learn and graduates ready to succeed.

REWARDING WORK AND STRENGTHENING
FAMILIES

We need a 21st Century revolution to reward work and strengthen families—

by giving every parent the tools to succeed at work and at the most important work of all—raising their children. That means making sure that every family has health care and the support to care for aging parents, the tools to bring their children up right, and that no child grows up in poverty.

From my first days as President, we have worked to give families better access to better health care. In 1997, we passed the Children's Health Insurance Program—CHIP—so that workers who don't have health care coverage through their employers at least can get it for their children. So far, we've enrolled 2 million children, and we're well on our way to our goal of 5 million.

But there are still more than 40 million Americans without health insurance, more than there were in 1993. Tonight I propose that we follow Vice President GORE's suggestion to make low income parents eligible for the insurance that covers their kids. Together with our children's initiative, we can cover nearly one quarter of the uninsured in America.

Again, I ask you to let people between 55 and 65—the fastest growing group of uninsured—buy into Medicare. And let's give them a tax credit to make that choice an affordable one.

When the Baby Boomers retire, Medicare will be faced with caring for twice as many of our citizens—and yet it is far from ready to do so. My generation must not ask our children's generation to shoulder our burden. We must strengthen and modernize Medicare now.

My budget includes a comprehensive plan to reform Medicare, to make it more efficient and competitive. And it dedicates nearly \$400 billion of our budget surplus to keep Medicare solvent past 2025; and, at long last, to give every senior a voluntary choice of affordable coverage for prescription drugs.

Lifesaving drugs are an indispensable part of modern medicine. No one creating a Medicare program today would even consider excluding coverage for prescription drugs. Yet more than three in five seniors now lack dependable drug coverage which can lengthen and enrich their lives. Millions of older Americans who need prescription drugs the most pay the highest prices for them.

In good conscience, we cannot let another year pass without extending to all seniors the lifeline of affordable prescription drugs.

Record numbers of Americans are providing for aging or ailing loved ones at home. Last year, I proposed a \$1,000 tax credit for long-term care. Frankly, that wasn't enough. This year, let's triple it to \$3,000—and this year, let's pass it.

And we must make needed investments to expand access to mental health care. I want to thank the person who has led our efforts to break down the barriers to the decent treatment of mental illness: Tipper Gore.

Taken together, these proposals would mark the largest investment in health care in the 35 years since the creation of Medicare—a big step toward assuring health care for all Americans, young and old.

We must also make investments that reward work and support families. Nothing does that better than the Earned Income Tax Credit, the EITC. The 'E' in 'EITC' is about earning; working; taking responsibility and being rewarded for it. In my first Address to you, I asked Congress to greatly expand this tax credit; and you did. As a result, in 1998 alone, the EITC helped more than 4.3 million Americans work their way out of poverty and toward the middle class—double the number in 1993.

Tonight, I propose another major expansion. We should reduce the marriage penalty for the EITC, making sure it rewards marriage just as it rewards work. And we should expand the tax credit for families with more than two children to provide up to \$1,100 more in tax relief.

We can't reward work and family unless men and women get equal pay for equal work. The female unemployment rate is the lowest in 46 years. Yet women still earn only about 75 cents for every dollar men earn. We must do better by providing the resources to enforce present equal pay laws, training more women for high-paying, high-tech jobs, and passing the Paycheck Fairness Act.

Two-thirds of new jobs are in the suburbs, far away from many low-income families. In the past two years, I have proposed and Congress has approved 110,000 new housing vouchers—rent subsidies to help working families live closer to the workplace. This year, let us more than double that number. If we want people to go to work, they have to be able to get to work.

Many working parents spend up to a quarter of their income on child care. Last year, we helped parents provide child care for about two million children. My child care initiative, along with funds already secured in welfare reform, would make child care better, safer, and more affordable for another 400,000 children.

For hard-pressed middle-income families, we should also expand the child care tax credit. And we should take the next big step. We should make that tax credit refundable for low-income families. For those making under \$30,000 a year, that could mean up to \$2,400 for child-care costs. We all say we're pro-work and pro-family. Passing this proposal would prove it.

Tens of millions of Americans live from paycheck to paycheck. As hard as they work, they still don't have the opportunity to save. Too few can make use of IRAs and 401-K retirement plans. We should do more to help working families save and accumulate wealth. That's the idea behind so-called Individual Development Accounts. Let's take that idea to a new level, with Retirement savings Accounts that enable

every low- and moderate-income family in America to save for retirement, a first home, a medical emergency, or a college education. I propose to match their contributions, however small, dollar for dollar, every year they save. And to give a major new tax credit for any small business that provides a meaningful pension to its workers.

Nearly one in three American children grows up in a home without a father. These children are five times more likely to live in poverty than children with both parents at home. Clearly, demanding and supporting responsible fatherhood is critical to lifting all children out of poverty.

We have doubled child support collections since 1992, and I am proposing tough new measures to hold still more fathers responsible. But we should recognize that a lot of fathers want to do right by their children—and need help to do it. Carlos Rosas of St. Paul, Minnesota, got that help. How he has a good job and he supports his son Ricardo. My budget will help 40,000 fathers make the choices Carlos did. And I thank him for being here.

If there is any issue on which we can reach across party lines it is in our common commitment to reward work and strengthen families. Thanks to overwhelming bipartisan support from this Congress, we have improved foster care, supported those who leave it when they turn eighteen, and dramatically increased the number of foster children going to adoptive homes. I thank you for that. Of course, I am especially grateful to the person who has led our efforts from the beginning, and who has worked tirelessly for children and families for thirty years now: my wife, Hillary.

If we take all these steps, we will move a long way toward empowering parents to succeed at home and at work and ensuring that no child is raised in poverty. We can make these vital investments in health care, education and support for working families—and still offer tax cuts to help pay for college, for retirement, to care for aging parents and reduce the marriage penalty—without forsaking the path of fiscal discipline that got us here. Indeed, we must make these investments and tax cuts in the context of a balanced budget that strengthens and extends the life of Social Security and Medicare and pays down the national debt.

RESPONSIBILITY AND CRIME

Crime in America has dropped for the past seven years—the longest decline on record, thanks to a national consensus we helped to forge on community police, sensible gun safety laws, and effective prevention. But nobody believes America is safe enough. So let's set a higher goal: let's make America the safest big country in the world.

Last fall, Congress supported my plan to hire—in addition to the 100,000 community police we have already funded—50,000 more, concentrated in

high-crime neighborhoods. I ask your continued support.

Soon after the Columbine tragedy, Congress considered common-sense gun safety legislation to require Brady background checks at gun shows, child safety locks for all new handguns, and a ban on the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips. With courage—and a tie-breaking vote by the Vice President—the Senate faced down the gun lobby, stood up for the American people, and passed this legislation. But the House failed to follow suit.

We've all seen what happens when guns fall into the wrong hands. Daniel Mauser was only 15 years old when he was gunned down at Columbine. He was an amazing kid, a straight-A student, a good skier. Like all parents who lost their children his father Tom has borne unimaginable grief. Somehow Tom has found the strength to honor his son by transforming his grief into action. Earlier this month, he took a leave of absence from his job to fight for tougher gun safety laws. I pray that his courage and wisdom will move this Congress to make common-sense gun safety legislation the very next order of business. Tom, thank you for being here tonight.

We must strengthen gun laws and better enforce laws already on the books. Federal gun crime prosecutions are up 16 percent since I took office. But again, we must do more. I propose to hire more federal and local gun prosecutors, and more ATF agents to crack down on illegal gun traffickers and bad-apple dealers. And we must give law enforcement the tools to trace every gun—and every bullet—used in a crime in America.

Listen to this: the accidental gun death rate of children under 15 in the United States is nine times higher than in the other 25 industrialized nations—combined. Technologies now exist that could lead to guns that can only be fired by the adults who own them. I ask Congress to fund research in Smart Gun technology. I also call on responsible leaders in the gun industry to work with us on smart guns and other steps to keep guns out of the wrong hands and keep our children safe.

Every parent I know worries about the impact of violence in the media on their children. I thank the entertainment industry for accepting my challenge to put voluntary ratings on TV programs and video and Internet games. But the ratings are too numerous, diverse, and confusing to be really useful to parents. Therefore, I now ask the industry to accept the First Lady's challenge—to develop a single, voluntary rating system for all children's entertainment, one that is easier for parents to understand and enforce.

If we take all these steps, we will be well on our way to making America the safest big country in the world.

OPENING NEW MARKETS

To keep our historic economic expansion going, we need a 21st Century revolution to open new markets, start new businesses, and hire new workers right

here in America—in our inner cities, poor rural areas, and on Indian reservations.

Our nation's prosperity has not yet reached these places. Over the last six months, I have traveled to many of them—joined by many of you, and many far-sighted business people—to shine a spotlight on the enormous potential in communities from Appalachia to the Mississippi Delta, from Watts to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Everywhere I've gone, I've met talented people eager for opportunity, and able to work. Let's put them to work.

For business, it's the smart thing to do. For America, it's the right thing to do. And if we don't do it now, when will we ever get around to it? I ask Congress to give businesses the same incentives to invest in America's new markets that they now have to invest in foreign markets. Tonight, I propose a large New Markets Tax Credit and other incentives to spur \$22 billion in private-sector capital—to create new businesses and new investments in inner cities and rural areas.

Empowerment Zones have been creating these opportunities for five years now. We should also increase incentives to invest in them and create more of them.

This is not a Democratic or a Republican issue. It is an American issue. Mr. Speaker, it was a powerful moment last November when you joined me and the Reverend Jesse Jackson in your home state of Illinois, and committed to working toward our common goal, by combining the best ideas from both sides of the aisle. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with you.

We must maintain our commitment to community development banks and keep the community reinvestment act strong so all Americans have access to the capital they need to buy homes and build businesses.

We need to make special efforts to address the areas with the highest rates of poverty. My budget includes a special \$110 million initiative to promote economic development in the Mississippi Delta; and \$1 billion to increase economic opportunity, health care, education and law enforcement for Native American communities. In this new century, we should honor our historic responsibility to empower the first Americans. I thank leaders and members from both parties who have already expressed an interest in working with us on these efforts.

There's another part of our American community in trouble today—our family farmers. When I signed the Farm Bill in 1996, I said there was a great danger it would work well in good times but not in bad. Well, droughts, floods, and historically low prices have made times very bad for our farmers. We must work together to strengthen the farm safety net, invest in land conservation, and create new markets by expanding our program for bio-based fuels and products.

Today, opportunity for all requires something new: having access to a computer and knowing how to use it. That means we must close the digital divide between those who have these tools and those who don't.

Connecting classrooms and libraries to the Internet is crucial, but it's just a start. My budget ensures that all new teachers are trained to teach 21st Century skills and creates technology centers in 1,000 communities to serve adults. This spring, I will invite high-tech leaders to join me on another New Markets tour—to close the digital divide and open opportunity for all our people. I thank the high-tech companies that are already doing so much in this area—and I hope the new tax incentives I have proposed will encourage others to join us.

If we take these steps, we will go a long way toward our goal of bringing opportunity to every community.

GLOBAL CHANGE AND AMERICAN LEADERSHIP

To realize the full possibilities of the new economy, we must reach beyond our own borders, to shape the revolution that is tearing down barriers and building new networks among nations and individuals, economies and cultures: globalization.

It is the central reality of our time. Change this profound is both liberating and threatening. But there is no turning back. And our open, creative society stands to benefit more than any other—if we understand, and act on, the new realities of interdependence. We must be at the center of every vital global network, as a good neighbor and partner. We cannot build our future without helping others to build theirs.

First, we must forge a new consensus on trade. Those of us who believe passionately in the power of open trade must ensure that it lifts both our living standards and our values, never tolerating abusive child labor or a race to the bottom on the environment and worker protection. Still, open markets and rules-based trade are the best engines we know for raising living standards, reducing global poverty and environmental destruction, and assuring the free flow of ideas. There is only one direction for America on trade: we must go forward.

And we must make developing economies our partners in prosperity—which is why I ask Congress to finalize our groundbreaking African and Caribbean Basin trade initiatives.

Globalization is about more than economics. Our purpose must be to bring the world together around democracy, freedom, and peace, and to oppose those who would tear it apart.

Here are the fundamental challenges I believe America must meet to shape the 21st Century world.

First, we must continue to encourage our former adversaries, Russia and China, to emerge as stable, prosperous, democratic nations. Both are being held back from reaching their full potential: Russia by the legacy of communism, economic turmoil, a cruel and

self-defeating war in Chechnya; China by the illusion that it can buy stability at the expense of freedom.

But think how much has changed in the past decade: thousands of former Soviet nuclear weapons eliminated; Russian soldiers serving with ours in the Balkans; Russian people electing their leaders for the first time in a thousand years. And in China, an economy more open to the world than ever before. No one can know for sure what direction these great countries will choose. But we must do everything in our power to increase the chance they will choose wisely, to be constructive members of the global community.

That is why we must support those Russians struggling for a democratic, prosperous future; continue to reduce both our nuclear arsenals; and help Russia safeguard weapons and materials that remain.

That is why Congress should support the agreement we negotiated to bring China into the WTO, by passing Permanent Normal Trade Relations as soon as possible this year. Our markets are already open to China. This agreement will open China's markets to us. And it will advance the cause of peace in Asia and promote the cause of change in China.

A second challenge is to protect our security from conflicts that pose the risk of wider war and threaten our common humanity. America cannot prevent every conflict or stop every outrage. But where our interests are at stake and we can make a difference, we must be peacemakers.

We should be proud of America's role in bringing the Middle East closer than ever to a comprehensive peace; building peace in Northern Ireland; working for peace in East Timor and Africa; promoting reconciliation between Greece and Turkey and in Cyprus; working to defuse crises between India and Pakistan; defending human rights and religious freedom.

And we should be proud of the men and women of our armed forces and those of our allies who stopped the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo—enabling a million innocent people to return to their homes.

When Slobodan Milosevic unleashed his terror on Kosova, Captain John Cherrey was one of the brave airmen who turned the tide. And when another American plane went down over Serbia, he flew into the teeth of enemy air defenses to bring his fellow pilot home. Thanks to our armed forces' skill and bravery, we prevailed without losing a single American in combat. Captain Cherrey, we honor you, and promise to finish the job you began.

A third challenge is to keep the inexorable march of technology from giving terrorists and potentially hostile nations the means to undermine our defenses. The same advances that have shrunk cell phones to fit in the palms of our hands can also make weapons of terror easier to conceal and easier to use.

We must meet this threat: by making effective agreements to restrain nuclear and missile programs in North Korea, curbing the flow and lethal technology to Iran; preventing Iraq from threatening its neighbors; increasing our preparedness against chemical and biological attack; protecting our vital computer systems from hackers and criminals; and developing a system to defend against new threats—while working to preserve our Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia.

I hope we can have a constructive bipartisan dialogue this year to build a consensus which will lead eventually to the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

A fourth challenge is to ensure that the stability of our planet is not threatened by the huge gulf between rich and poor. We cannot accept a world in which part of humanity lives on the cutting edge of a new economy, while the rest live on the bare edge of survival. We must do our part, with expanded trade, expanded aid, and the expansion of freedom.

From Nigeria to Indonesia, more people won the right to choose their leaders in 1999 than in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell. We must stand by democracies—like Colombia, fighting narco-traffickers for its people's lives, and our children's lives. I have proposed a strong two-year package to help Colombia win this fight; and I ask for your support. And I will propose tough new legislation to go after what drug barons value most—their money.

In a world where 1.2 billion people live on less than a dollar a day, we must do our part in the global endeavor to reduce the debts of the poorest countries so they can invest in education, health and economic growth—as the Pope and other religious leaders have urged. Last year, Congress made a down payment on America's share. And I ask for your continued support.

And America must help more nations break the bonds of disease. Last year in Africa, AIDS killed ten times as many people as war did. My budget invests \$150 million more in the fight against this and other infectious killers. Today, I propose a tax credit to speed the development of vaccines for diseases like malaria, TB and AIDS. I ask the private sector and our partners around the world to join us in embracing this cause. Together, we can save millions of lives.

Our final challenge is the most important: to pass a national security budget that keeps our military the best trained and best equipped in the world, with heightened readiness and 21st Century weapons; raises salaries for our service men and women; protects our veterans; fully funds the diplomacy that keeps our soldiers out of war; and makes good on our commitment to pay our UN dues and arrears. I ask you to pass this budget and I thank you for the extraordinary support you have given—Republicans and Democrats

alike—to our men and women in uniform. I especially want to thank Secretary Cohen for symbolizing our bipartisan commitment to our national security—and Janet Cohen, I thank you for tirelessly traveling the world to show our support for the troops.

If we meet all these challenges, America can lead the world toward peace and freedom in an era of globalization.

RESPONSIBILITY, OPPORTUNITY, AND THE
ENVIRONMENT

I am grateful for the opportunities the Vice President and I have had to work hard to protect the environment and finally to put to rest the notion that you can't expand the economy while protecting the environment. As our economy has grown, we have rid more than 500 neighborhoods of toxic waste and ensured cleaner air and water for millions of families. In the past three months alone, we have acted to preserve more than 40 million acres of roadless lands in our National Forests and created three new National Monuments.

But as our communities grow, our commitment to conservation must grow as well. Tonight, I propose creating a permanent conservation fund to restore wildlife, protect coastlines, and save natural treasures from California redwoods to the Everglades. This Lands Legacy endowment represents by far the most enduring investment in land preservation ever proposed.

Last year, the Vice President launched a new effort to help make communities more livable—so children will grow up next to parks, not parking lots, and parents can be home with their children instead of stuck in traffic. Tonight, we propose new funding for advanced transit systems—for saving precious open spaces—for helping major cities around the Great Lakes protect their waterways and enhance their quality of life.

The greatest environmental challenge of the new century is global warming. Scientists tell us that the 1990s were the hottest decade of the entire millennium. If we fail to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, deadly heat waves and droughts will become more frequent, coastal areas will be flooded, economies disrupted.

Many people in the United States and around the world still believe we can't cut greenhouse gas pollution without slowing economic growth. In the Industrial Age that may have been true. In the digital economy, it isn't. New technologies make it possible to cut harmful emissions and provide even more growth. For example, just last week, automakers unveiled cars that get 70 to 80 miles a gallon—the fruits of a unique research partnership between government and industry. Before you know it, efficient production of biofuels will give us the equivalent of hundreds of miles from a gallon of gas.

To speed innovations in environmental technologies, I propose giving major tax incentives to businesses for

the production of clean energy—and to families for buying energy-saving homes and appliances and the next generation of super-efficient cars when they hit the showroom floor. I also call on the auto industry to use available technologies to make all new cars more fuel efficient right away. And on Congress to make more of our clean-energy technologies available to the developing world—creating cleaner growth abroad and new jobs at home.

THE OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In the new century, innovations in science and technology will be the key not only to the health of the environment but to miraculous improvements in the quality of our lives and advances in the economy.

Later this year, researchers will complete the first draft of the entire human genome—the very blueprint of life. It is important for all Americans to recognize that your tax dollars have fueled this research—and that this and other wise investments in science are leading to a revolution in our ability to detect, treat, and prevent disease.

For example, researchers have identified genes that cause Parkinson's Disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer—and they are designing precision therapies that will block the harmful effects of these faulty genes for good. Researchers are already using this new technique to target and destroy cells that cause breast cancer. Soon, we may be able to use it to prevent the onset of Alzheimer's Disease. Scientists are also working on an artificial retina to help many blind people to see and microchips that would directly stimulate damaged spinal cords and allow people who are now paralyzed to stand up and walk.

Science and engineering innovations are also propelling our remarkable prosperity. Information technology alone now accounts for a third of our economic growth, with jobs that pay almost 80 percent above the private sector average. Again, we should keep in mind: government-funded research brought supercomputers, the Internet, and communications satellites into being. Soon researchers will bring us devices that can translate foreign languages as fast as you can speak; materials 10 times stronger than steel at a fraction of the weight; and molecular computers the size of a teardrop with the power of today's fastest supercomputers.

To accelerate the march of discovery across all disciplines of science and technology, my budget includes an unprecedented \$3 billion increase in the 21st Century Research Fund, the largest increase in civilian research in a generation.

These new breakthroughs must be used in ways that reflect our most cherished values. First and foremost, we must safeguard our citizens' privacy. Last year, we proposed rules to protect every citizen's medical records. This year, we will finalize those rules.

We have also taken the first steps to protect the privacy of bank and credit card statements and other financial records. Soon I will send legislation to the Congress to finish that job. We must also act to prevent any genetic discrimination by employers or insurers.

These steps will allow America to lead toward the far frontiers of science and technology—enhancing our health, environment, and economy in ways we cannot even imagine today.

COMMUNITY

At a time when science, technology and the forces of globalization are bringing so many changes into our lives, it is more important than ever that we strengthen the bonds that root us in our local communities and in our national communities.

No tie binds different people together like citizen service. There is a new spirit of service in America, a movement we have supported with AmeriCorps, an expanded Peace Corps, and unprecedented new partnerships with businesses, foundations, and community groups. Partnerships to enlist 12,000 companies in moving 650,000 of our fellow citizens from welfare to work. To battle drug abuse and AIDS. To teach young people to read. To Save America's Treasures. To strengthen the arts. To fight teen pregnancy. To prevent youth violence. To promote racial healing.

We can do even more to help Americans help each other. We should help faith-based organizations do more to fight poverty and drug abuse and help young people get back on the right track with initiatives like Second Chance Homes to help unwed teen mothers. We should support Americans who tithe and contribute to charities, but don't earn enough to claim a tax deduction for it. Tonight, I propose new tax incentives to allow low- and middle-income citizens to get that deduction.

We should do more to help new immigrants fully participate in the American community—investing more to teach them civics and English. And since everyone in our community counts, we must make sure everyone is counted in this year's census.

Within ten years there will be no majority race in our largest state, California. In a little more than 50 years, there will be no majority race in America. In a more interconnected world, this diversity can be our greatest strength. Just look around this chamber. We have members from virtually every racial, ethnic, and religious background. And America is stronger for it. But as we have seen, these differences all too often spark hatred and division, even here at home.

We have seen a man dragged to death in Texas simply because he was black. A young man murdered in Wyoming simply because he was gay. In the last year alone, we've seen the shootings of African Americans, Asian Americans, and Jewish children simply because of

who they were. This is not the American way. We must draw the line. Without delay, we must pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act and the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. And we should reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

No American should be subjected to discrimination in finding a home, getting a job, going to school, or securing a loan. Tonight, I propose the largest ever investment to enforce America's civil rights laws. Protections in law must be protections in fact.

Last February, I created the White House Office of One America to promote racial reconciliation. That's what Hank Aaron, has done all his life. From his days as baseball's all-time homerun king to his recent acts of healing, he has always brought Americans together. We're pleased he's with us tonight.

This fall, at the White House, one of America's leading scientists said something we should all remember. He said all human beings, genetically, are 99.9 percent the same. So modern science affirms what ancient faith has always taught: the most important fact of life is our common humanity.

Therefore, we must do more than tolerate diversity—we must honor it and celebrate it.

My fellow Americans, each time I prepare for the State of the Union, I approach it with great hope and expectations for our nation. But tonight is special—because we stand on the mountaintop of a new millennium. Behind us we see the great expanse of American achievement; before us, even grander frontiers of possibility.

We should be filled with gratitude and humility for our prosperity and progress; with awe and joy at what lies ahead; and with absolute determination to make the most of it.

When the framers finished crafting our Constitution, Benjamin Franklin stood in Independence Hall and reflected on a painting of the sun, low on the horizon. He said, "I have often wondered whether that sun was rising or setting." Today, Franklin said, "I have the happiness to know it is a rising sun." Well, today, because each generation of Americans has kept the fire of freedom burning brightly, lighting those frontiers of possibility, we still bask in the warmth of Mr. Franklin's rising sun.

After 224 years, the American Revolution continues. We remain a new nation. As long as our dreams outweigh our memories, America will be forever young. That is our destiny. And this is our moment.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

¶

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 8:35 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which

it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 241. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint resolution of Congress to receive a message from the President on the state of the Union.

¶

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time and placed on the Calendar:

S. 2006. A bill for the relief of Yongyi Song.

¶

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first time and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BROWNBACK (for himself, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. LOTT, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire):

S. 2010. A bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to follow normal rulemaking procedures in establishing additional requirements for noncommercial educational television broadcasters; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. ASHCROFT:

S. 2011. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to expand the prohibition on stalking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KYL:

S. 2012. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax to elementary and secondary school teachers who provide classroom materials; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LOTT (for Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2013. A bill to restore health care equity for medicare-eligible uniformed services retirees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

¶

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KYL:

S. 2012. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax to elementary and secondary school teachers who provide classroom materials; to the Committee on Finance.

TEACHER TAX CREDIT RELIEF ACT, 2000

• Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Teacher Tax Credit Relief Act of 2000. The act would provide an annual tax credit of up to \$100 for teachers' un-reimbursed classroom expenditures that are qualified under the Internal Revenue Code.

Thomas Jefferson once said that "an educated citizenry is essential for the preservation of democracy." It falls to our teachers—through their hard work and lifetime of commitment to young people—to inculcate the academic values and analytical skills that make good citizenship possible.

In my discussions with teachers—public and private—I have been amazed to learn that many use their own money to cover the cost of classroom

materials that are not supplied by their schools or school districts. These expenditures enhance our childrens' education but are paid for out-of-pocket.

In fact, in 1996, according to a study by the National Education Association, the average K-12 teacher spent \$408 annually on classroom materials needed for education but not supplied by the schools. These materials include everything from books, workbooks, erasers, paper, pens, equipment related to classroom instruction, and professional enrichment programs.

Under current law, a tax deduction is allowed for such expenses, but only if the teacher itemizes, and only if the expenses exceed two percent of the teacher's AGI. Of course, a deduction just reduces taxable income. A credit would give teachers relief dollar-for-dollar spent, up to the \$100 annual limit.

On a modest income, teachers provide an incalculable service to our country. Surely, we should not expect them to pay for school supplies out of their salary, when they have already committed their lives to the education of our young.

A similar provision enacted by the Arizona legislature in 1995 has been extremely well-received by teachers. The provision was recently upheld as constitutional by the Arizona Supreme Court.

Please join me in supporting this bill. Our teachers deserve to be at least partially reimbursed for financial sacrifices they make to educate our nation's children.●

By Mr. LOTT (for Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2013. A bill to restore health care equity for Medicare-eligible uniformed services retirees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

HONORING HEALTH CARE COMMITMENTS TO SERVICEMEMBERS PAST AND PRESENT ACT OF 2000

• Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, last November, I spoke on the floor of the Senate about the severe deficiencies in our nation's military health care delivery system. We, as a nation, face a very critical challenge in determining how best to reconfigure the military health care delivery system so that it can continue to meet its military readiness and peace-time obligations during this period of ongoing change in our base and force structure.

This is a challenge that has concerned me for some time. As I have been working on this matter and deciding how best to proceed, I have met with, and heard from, many military family members, veterans, and military retirees from around the country. And, in that process, I have been inundated with suggestions for reform. During every meeting and in every letter, I have heard from retired service men and women about so many problems with all aspects of the military medical care system—including long waiting periods, access to the right kind of

care, access to needed pharmaceutical drugs, and especially the "broken promise" of free lifetime health care for military retirees and their spouses. I have also personally heard such concerns repeatedly expressed as I have traveled extensively throughout the United States over the past several months.

I have found that a primary concern among military retirees and their families is the "broken promise" of lifetime medical care. In this vein, retiree health care is a readiness issue. Today's service members are acutely aware of retirees' disenfranchisement from military health care coverage, and exit surveys cite this issue with increasing frequency as one of the factors in members' decisions to leave the service. In fact, a recent General Accounting Office study found that poor "access to medical and dental care in retirement" was among the top five elements of dissatisfaction among active duty officers in retention-critical specialties.

Failure to keep health care commitments is hurting service recruiting efforts, as well. Traditionally, retirees have been the services' most effective recruiters, and their children and those of family friends have been more likely to serve. Unfortunately, increasing numbers of retirees who have seen the government renege on its "lifetime health care" promises have become more reluctant to recommend service careers to their family members and friends. Restoring retirees' confidence in their health care coverage could go a long way in restoring this invaluable recruiting resource.

Certainly, the high cost of providing quality health care has contributed to Congress' failure to implement meaningful reform in the past. Yet, even though Congress has increased the President's defense budget requests in recent years to attempt to meet the military's future needs, it simultaneously has squandered billions each year on projects the military did not request and does not need. Last year alone, Congress appropriated over \$6 billion for wasteful, unrequested, and low-priority projects that would have no positive effect on preparing our military for future challenges, and would address this military health care quandary.

Congress also continues to refuse to close military bases that are not essential to our security, permitting politics to outweigh military readiness, at a cost to the taxpayer of nearly \$7 billion each year. If Congress would allow the Pentagon to privatize or consolidate depot and base maintenance activities, savings of \$2 billion each year could be achieved. In addition, Congress refuses to eliminate anti-competitive "Buy American" restrictions, which could save almost \$5.5 billion annually on defense contracts. These common sense reforms together would free up nearly \$20 billion per year, which could be used to begin correcting our readiness

shortfalls and, significantly, provide a quality health care delivery system for our older military retirees, once and for all.

I must add that there are other wasteful funding efforts that are particularly disgraceful. While Congress wastes taxpayer money on obsolete infrastructure, unneeded weapon systems, and projects that have no meaningful value to our Armed Forces, it simultaneously refuses to adequately pay the nearly 12,000 enlisted military personnel who are forced to subsist on food stamps. We must work to improve our treatment of all the honored military personnel serving our nation.

INITIAL STEPS ON THE ROAD TO REFORM

Last October, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the other Joint Chiefs testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the state of the military. During that hearing, they universally declared the year 2000 to be the year of military health care reform.

The rush to implement military health care reform, as evidenced by a plethora of well-intentioned legislation introduced by Congress and to be proposed by the Administration, and the evaluation of current health care delivery pilot projects must be balanced with the need to provide uninterrupted critical health care to the over-65 military retirees and their families, as well as, recognize the need to provide free health care to those Medicare eligible retirees who entered military service before June 7, 1956. Their concern about losing even the minimal health care they received from the time of retirement until age 65 increases dramatically as they turn 65. If this is to be the year of military health care, a key part of this effort must entail reassuring these older retirees that the Department of Defense will no longer deny or ignore their legitimate health care needs. By doing so, Congress also will be taking an essential step in reassuring today's servicemembers that the government does, in fact, keep its recruiting and retention promises concerning health care and other career service benefits.

The legislation that I am proposing is the next step in my effort to lead Congress down the road to meaningful reform of our nation's military health care delivery system. This measure adopts positive ideas already based in other legislation, but offers an essential element that other plans do not—that is, choice. My legislation would offer the military retiree and his family a choice of several health care delivery plans. Having the choice to decide which health care plan works well is important for two reasons: to ensure control of overall health care reform costs and to reflect the reality that each retiree's needs can be very different.

Some military retirees live near military installations and could use military health care if they had access to it. Others who live far from installa-

tions might be satisfied, for example, with the addition of a relatively low-cost prescription drug benefit. Still others, however, might desperately need full-coverage insurance such as the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). The plan would accommodate these different requirements. This health care reform plan also would be portable and less dependent on any specific military hospital system, particularly if further rounds of base closures occur.

SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

For Medicare-eligible military retirees, this legislation authorizes the following options:

Option 1: Establishes a nationwide mail-order pharmacy service and community-based pharmacy network to serve the prescription drug needs of over-age 65 military retired members, their spouses and survivors of the military community; this provision would expand the Base Realignment and Closure (mail-order and TRICARE retail) pharmacy benefit nationwide to all Medicare-eligible uniformed services beneficiaries beginning October 1, 2000.

Option 2: Allows Medicare-eligible retirees to enroll in the Medicare subvention benefit and expands TRICARE Senior Prime nationwide beginning October 1, 2000.

Option 3: Allows Medicare-eligible retirees to enroll in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) and would expand FEHBP benefits worldwide effective with the fall 2000 open enrollment period and coverage beginning January 1, 2001.

This legislation includes a critical "Sense of the Senate" instruction: That urgent priority should be given to the enactment of legislation (such as S. 2003/H.R. 2966) that provides health care coverage at no cost for Medicare-eligible military retirees who first entered the service before June 7, 1956, and their dependents. Such legislation also should have priority consideration by the Senate committee with jurisdiction over the bill and the measure should receive expedited consideration by the full Senate, immediately after it has been reported out of committee to the Senate.

This legislation proposes to make essential improvements to the military health delivery system for active duty servicemembers and their families, including:

Elimination of copayments and deductibles for all active duty family members enrolled in TRICARE Prime; this is a great quality of life improvement for our military personnel and their families, especially our enlisted families; and

Extension of TRICARE Prime Remote coverage free of charge to the families of 80,000 active duty members living more than 50 miles from a military medical treatment facility (i.e., recruiters, ROTC instructors, reserve center and National Guard active duty personnel, and others similarly situated), who are unable to participate in TRICARE Prime.

This measure proposes other significant administrative improvements to the military medical delivery system, including:

Promotes efficiency in the military health care system by combining the various uniformed services health care delivery systems for Medicare-eligibles under a common delivery program, TRICARE Senior Prime, just as the same systems for younger beneficiaries have been combined under TRICARE Prime;

Establishes an account within the Treasury called the Uniformed Services Retirees Health Care Account that helps fund the added cost of this new benefit for age-65 uniformed services retirees; under this concept, savings from efficiencies (such as moving to electronic vs. paper claims processing) could be devoted to fulfilling health care obligations to older retirees;

Authorizes the Secretary of Defense to enter into contracts with private industry for the purpose of recovering overpayments to civilian health care providers under TRICARE program; these services may include audits and other services deemed necessary by the Secretary of Defense;

Directs the Secretary of Defense to enhance and simplify the TRICARE health program through administrative efficiencies and the use of the Internet relating to marketing, beneficiary enrollment, beneficiary and provider education, claims processing, scheduling of appointments and other services, as deemed appropriate by the Secretary, to enhance the military health delivery system; and

Directs the Secretary of Defense to design and issue a national enrollment card for the TRICARE health program that shall serve as an enrollment card for participation in the TRICARE program nationwide; the enrollment card is designed to facilitate the ready portability of benefits under TRICARE nationwide.

CONCLUSION

The federal government must not fail our nation's military retirees, their families, and survivors in ensuring the continuation of adequate health care coverage in their late years. I believe the steps I have outlined today, which have earned the overwhelming endorsement of The Military Coalition and The Military And Veterans' Alliance, representing 9 million members, start us down the road to comprehensive reform of the military health care system. Such an effort has not been seen in decades, and would fulfill our obligation to our military retirees and bolster retention and readiness among today's servicemembers.

Mr. President, I concur with the Joint Chiefs that this truly is the year of military health care reform. The success of the legislation that I am introducing today will depend significantly on Congress' ability to produce real military health care reform and provide the necessary resources in a timely manner. In addition, it will be important that the Pentagon, private industry, and the military retirees and

active duty servicemembers who utilize the system can work together and galvanize support for a solid military health care system for the long term.

Mr. President, I ask that letters from The Military Coalition, The Military And Veterans Alliance, the Air Force Association (AFA), the National Association For Uniformed Services (NAUS), and Colonel George "Bud" Day, USAF, Ret. (a Medal of Honor recipient and who is very active in military and veterans' issues) in support of this comprehensive military health care reform plan be placed in the RECORD, immediately following my remarks. In addition, I ask that the bill be printed in the RECORD as well as the letters from the military and veterans' associations.●

The material follows:

S. 2013

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Honoring Health Care Commitments to Servicemembers Past and Present Act of 2000".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF SENATE ON HEALTH CARE FOR MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES WHO FIRST BECAME MEMBERS BEFORE JUNE 7, 1956, AND THEIR DEPENDENTS.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) urgent priority should be given to the enactment of legislation that provides health care coverage for Medicare-eligible members and former members of the uniformed services who first became members of the uniformed services before June 7, 1956, and for their dependents, at no cost to such members, former members, and dependents; and

(2) the bill proposing to provide the health care coverage described in paragraph (1), which has been introduced in the Senate, should—

(A) receive priority of consideration by the committee of the Senate having jurisdiction over the bill; and

(B) become the pending business of the Senate immediately after its reporting to the Senate by the committee of the Senate described in paragraph (1).

SEC. 3. PARTICIPATION OF MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARIES IN CERTAIN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PHARMACY PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than October 1, 2000, the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) expand and make permanent the demonstration project for pharmaceuticals by mail established under subsection (a) of section 702 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993 (10 U.S.C. 1079 note) in order to permit individuals described in subsection (b) worldwide to obtain pharmaceuticals through the project; and

(2) modify each managed health care program which includes a managed care network of community retail pharmacies under subsection (b) of such section 702 to supply prescription pharmaceuticals to the individuals described in subsection (b) of this section through such network in the area covered by such program.

(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), an individual eligible to obtain pharmaceuticals under this section is a member or former member of the uniformed services described in section 1074(b) of title 10, United States Code, a dependent of a member described in subsection (a)(2)(B) or (b) of section 1076 of that title, or a dependent of a member who died while on

active duty for a period of more than 30 days, who is entitled to hospital insurance benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.).

(2) An individual described in paragraph (1) is not eligible to obtain pharmaceuticals under this section if the individual is covered by a health benefits plan offered through the Federal Employee Health Benefits program, whether as an employee under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, or pursuant to section 1108 of title 10, United States Code.

(c) FEES AND CHARGES.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the amount of the deductible, copayment, annual fee, or other fee, if any, paid by an eligible individual described in subsection (b) who obtains a pharmaceutical under this section through the project referred to in subsection (a)(1) or a retail pharmacy network referred to in subsection (a)(2) shall not exceed the amount of the deductible copayment, annual fee, or other fee paid by other persons for such pharmaceutical through the project or the pharmacy network, as the case may be.

(2) An eligible individual described in subsection (b) shall not be charged an enrollment fee for participation in the project or a retail pharmacy network under this section.

(3) The Secretary of Defense may not establish or collect any new fee or charge under the project referred to in subsection (a)(1), or any retail pharmacy network referred to in subsection (a)(2), by reason of the participation of eligible individuals described in subsection (b) in the project or network under this section.

SEC. 4. NATIONWIDE EXPANSION OF MEDICARE SUBVENTION.

(a) PARTICIPANTS.—Effective October 1, 2000, subsection (a)(4) of section 1896 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ggg) is amended by adding after subparagraph (D) the following new flush matter:

"Notwithstanding the first sentence of this subparagraph, the term does not include any individual who is covered by a health benefits plan offered through the Federal Employee Health Benefits program, whether as an employee under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, or pursuant to section 1108 of title 10, United States Code."

(b) REPEAL OF LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF SITES.—Effective October 1, 2000, paragraph (2) of section 1896(b) of such Act is amended to read as follows:

"(2) LOCATION OF SITES.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The program shall be conducted in any site designated jointly by the administering Secretaries.

"(B) FEE-FOR-SERVICE.—If feasible, at least 1 of the sites designated under subparagraph (A) shall be conducted using the fee-for-service reimbursement method described in subsection (1)(1).

"(C) UNIFORMED SERVICES TREATMENT FACILITIES.—If feasible, designated providers covered by section 722 of the National Defense Authorization Act for 1997 (Public Law 104-201; 10 U.S.C. 1073 note) shall be included among the sites designated by the administering Secretaries."

(c) MAKING PROJECT PERMANENT; CHANGES IN PROJECT REFERENCES.—

(1) ELIMINATION OF TIME LIMITATION.—Paragraph (4) of section 1896(b) of such Act is repealed.

(2) CONFORMING CHANGES OF REFERENCES TO DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.—Section 1896 of such Act is further amended—

(A) in the heading, by striking "DEMONSTRATION PROJECT" and inserting "PROGRAM";

(B) by amending subsection (a)(2) to read as follows:

“(2) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’ means the program carried out under this section.”;

(C) in the heading to subsection (b), by striking “DEMONSTRATION PROJECT” and inserting “PROGRAM”;

(D) by striking “demonstration project” or “project” each place either appears and inserting “program”; and

(E) in subsection (k)(2)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF DEMONSTRATION PROJECT” and inserting “PROGRAM”; and

(ii) by striking subparagraphs (A) through (C) and inserting the following:

“(A) whether there is a cost to the health care program under this title in conducting the program under this section; and

“(B) whether the terms and conditions of the program should be modified.”.

(3) REPEAL OF OBSOLETE REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Paragraph (5) of section 1896(b) of such Act is repealed.

(d) CORRECTION OF REFERENCE TO MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE RETIREES.—Section 1896 of such Act is further amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking “MILITARY RETIREES” and inserting “UNIFORMED SERVICES RETIREES”;

(2) in paragraph (4) of subsection (a)—

(A) in the caption, by striking “MILITARY RETIREE” and inserting “UNIFORMED SERVICES RETIREE”; and

(B) by striking “military retiree” and inserting “uniformed services retiree”; and

(3) by striking “military retirees” each place it appears and inserting “uniformed services retirees”.

(e) PERMITTING PAYMENT ON A FEE-FOR-SERVICE BASIS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1896 of the Social Security Act is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(1) REIMBURSEMENT ON FEE-FOR-SERVICE BASIS.—

“(1) REIMBURSEMENT AT DESIGNATED SITES.—In the case of a medicare health care service provided at a site, if any, designated for operation under the fee-for-service model under subsection (b)(2)(B), the Secretary shall reimburse the Secretary of Defense at a rate equal to 95 percent of the amount that otherwise would be payable under this title on a noncapitated basis for the service if the site were not part of the program under this section.

“(2) REIMBURSEMENT FOR UNENROLLED INDIVIDUALS.—Notwithstanding subsection (i), in the case of medicare-eligible uniformed services retirees or dependents who are not enrolled in the program under this section, the Secretary may reimburse the Secretary of Defense for medicare health care services provided to such retirees or dependents at a military treatment facility under the program at a rate that does not exceed the rate of payment that would otherwise be made under this title for such services.

“(3) INAPPLICABILITY OF LIMITATIONS ON FEDERAL PAYMENTS.—Sections 1814(c) and 1835(d), and paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 1862(a), do not apply to the making of payments under this subsection.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such section is further amended—

(A) in subsections (b)(1)(B)(v) and (b)(1)(B)(viii)(I), by inserting “or subsection (1)” after “subsection (i)”; and

(B) in subsection (d)(1)(A), by inserting “(insofar as it provides for the enrollment of individuals and payment on the basis described in subsection (i))” before “shall meet”;

(C) in subsection (d)(1)(A), by inserting “and the program (insofar as it provides for payment for medicare health care services provided at a military treatment facility on the basis described in subsection (1)) shall meet all requirements that are applicable to

facilities that provide such services under this title” after “medicare payments”;

(D) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting “, insofar as it provides for the enrollment of individuals and payment on the basis described in subsection (i),” before “shall comply”;

(E) in subsection (g)(1), by inserting “insofar as it provides for the enrollment of individuals and payment on the basis described in subsection (i),” before “the Secretary of Defense”;

(F) in subsection (i)(1), by inserting “and subsection (1)” after “of this subsection”;

(G) in subsection (i)(4), by inserting “and subsection (1)” after “under this subsection”; and

(H) in subsection (j)(2)(B)(ii), by inserting “or subsection (1)” after “subsection (i)(1)”.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection take effect on October 1, 2000, and apply to services furnished on or after such date.

(f) ELIMINATION OF RESTRICTION ON ELIGIBILITY.—Section 1896(b)(1) of such Act is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) ELIMINATION OF RESTRICTIVE POLICY.—If the enrollment capacity in the program has been reached at a particular site designated under paragraph (2) and the Secretary therefore limits enrollment at the site to medicare-eligible uniformed services retirees and dependents who are enrolled in TRICARE Prime (as defined for purposes of chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code) at the site immediately before attaining 65 years of age, participation in the program by a retiree or dependent at such site shall not be restricted based on whether the retiree or dependent has a civilian primary care manager instead of a military primary care manager.”.

(g) MEDIGAP PROTECTION FOR ENROLLEES.—Section 1896 of such Act is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(m) MEDIGAP PROTECTION FOR ENROLLEES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the provisions of section 1882(s)(3) (other than clauses (i) through (iv) of subparagraph (B)) and section 1882(s)(4) shall apply to any enrollment (and termination of enrollment) in the program (for which payment is made on the basis described in subsection (i)) in the same manner as they apply to enrollment (and termination of enrollment) with a Medicare+Choice organization in a Medicare+Choice plan.

“(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—In applying paragraph (1)—

“(A) in the case of enrollments occurring before October 1, 2000, any reference in clause (v) or (vi) of section 1882(s)(3)(B) to 12 months is deemed a reference to the period ending on September 30, 2001; and

“(B) the notification required under section 1882(s)(3)(D) shall be provided in a manner specified by the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the Secretary.”.

SEC. 5. INCLUSION OF MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE UNIFORMED SERVICES BENEFICIARIES IN FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM.

(a) FEHBP OPTION.—(1) Section 1108 of title 10, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§1108. Health care coverage through Federal Employees Health Benefits program

“(a) FEHBP OPTION.—(1) The Secretary of Defense, after consulting with the other administering Secretaries, shall enter into an agreement with the Office of Personnel Management under which a medicare-eligible covered beneficiary described in subsection (b) will be offered an opportunity to enroll in a health benefits plan offered through the

Federal Employee Health Benefits program under chapter 89 of title 5.

“(2) The agreement may provide for limitations on enrollment of medicare-eligible covered beneficiaries in the Federal Employee Health Benefits program if the Office of Personnel Management determines the limitations are necessary to allow for adequate planning for access for services under the Federal Employee Health Benefits program.

“(b) MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE COVERED BENEFICIARY DESCRIBED.—A medicare-eligible covered beneficiary referred to in subsection (a) is a covered beneficiary under this chapter who for any reason is or becomes entitled to hospital insurance benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.). The covered beneficiary shall not be required to satisfy any eligibility criteria specified in chapter 89 of title 5 as a condition for enrollment in a health benefits plan offered through the Federal Employee Health Benefits program pursuant to subsection (a).

“(c) LIMITATIONS ON ENROLLMENT.—The number of medicare-eligible covered beneficiaries enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program under this section shall not exceed 275,000.

“(d) CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN UNIFORMED SERVICES HEALTH SYSTEM.—(1) A medicare-eligible covered beneficiary who enrolls in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program under this section shall not be eligible to receive health care under section 1086 or 1097 of this title.

“(2)(A) Subject to such limitations as the Secretary of Defense, after consultation with the other administering Secretaries, a medicare-eligible covered beneficiary described in paragraph (1) may continue to receive health care in a military medical treatment facility on a space available basis.

“(B) A treatment facility providing care under subparagraph (A) shall be reimbursed by the Federal Employees Health Benefits program for the cost of such care at rates not to exceed the rates of reimbursement for such care under the program if such care had been provided by a health care provider other than the treatment facility.

“(e) LIMITATIONS ON OTHER HEALTH CARE COVERAGE.—(1) A medicare-eligible covered beneficiary who is covered by a health benefits plan through the Federal Employees Health Benefits program under subsection (a) may not, during a period of coverage under such plan under this section—

“(A) be enrolled in a health benefits plan under the Federal Employees Health Benefits program as an employee under chapter 89 of title 5;

“(B) be enrolled in the medicare subvention program for military retirees under section 1896 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ggg);

“(C) otherwise obtain pharmaceuticals by mail under section 702(a) of Public Law 102-484 (10 U.S.C. 1079 note) pursuant to section 3(a)(1) of the Honoring Health Care Commitments to Servicemembers Past and Present Act of 2000; or

“(D) otherwise obtain pharmaceuticals through a network of retail pharmacies under section 702(b) of Public Law 102-484 pursuant to section 3(a)(2) of the Honoring Health Care Commitments to Servicemembers Past and Present Act of 2000.

“(2) A medicare-eligible covered beneficiary who is also eligible for participation in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program as an employee under chapter 89 of title 5 shall participate in the program, if at all, under that chapter.

“(f) CONTRIBUTIONS.—(1) In the case of a medicare-eligible covered beneficiary who enrolls in a health benefits plan offered

through the Federal Employee Health Benefits program pursuant to subsection (a), the administering Secretary concerned shall be responsible for Government contributions that the Office of Personnel Management determines are necessary to cover all costs in excess of beneficiary contributions under paragraph (2).

"(2) The contribution required from the enrolled medicare-eligible covered beneficiary shall be equal to the amount that would be withheld from the pay of a similarly situated Federal employee who enrolls in a health benefits plan under chapter 89 of title 5.

"(g) MANAGEMENT OF PARTICIPATION.—(1) If an enrolled medicare-eligible covered beneficiary is a member or former member of the uniformed services described in section 1074(b) of this title, the authority responsible for approving retired or retainer pay or equivalent pay for the member or former member shall manage the participation of the enrolled member or former member in a health benefits plan offered through the Federal Employee Health Benefits program pursuant to subsection (a).

"(2) If an enrolled medicare-eligible covered beneficiary is a dependent of a member or former member, the authority that is, or would be, responsible for approving retired or retainer pay or equivalent pay for the member or former member shall manage the participation of the dependent in a health benefits plan offered through the Federal Employee Health Benefits program under subsection (a).

"(3) The Office of Personnel Management shall maintain separate risk pools for enrolled medicare-eligible covered beneficiaries until such time as the Director of the Office of Personnel Management determines that complete inclusion of enrolled medicare-eligible covered beneficiaries under chapter 89 of title 5 will not adversely affect Federal employees and annuitants enrolled in health benefits plans under such chapter.

"(h) EFFECT OF CANCELLATION.—The cancellation by a medicare-eligible covered beneficiary of coverage under the Federal Employee Health Benefits program under this section shall be irrevocable for purposes of this section.

"(i) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Not later than November 1 of each year, the administering Secretaries and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall jointly submit to Congress a report describing the provision of health care services to medicare-eligible covered beneficiaries under this section during the preceding fiscal year. The report shall address or contain the following:

"(1) The number of medicare-eligible covered beneficiaries enrolled in health benefits plans offered through the Federal Employee Health Benefits program pursuant to subsection (a), both in terms of total number and as a percentage of all medicare-eligible covered beneficiaries receiving health care through the health care system of the uniformed services.

"(2) The out-of-pocket cost to enrolled medicare-eligible covered beneficiaries under such health benefits plans.

"(3) The cost to the Government (including the Department of Defense, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Health and Human Services) of providing care under such health benefits plans as a result of this section.

"(4) A comparison of the costs determined under paragraphs (2) and (3) and the costs that would have otherwise been incurred by the Government and enrolled medicare-eligible covered beneficiaries under alternative health care options available to the administering Secretaries.

"(5) The effect of this section on the cost, access, and utilization rates of other health

care options under the health care system of the uniformed services.

"(j) TIME FOR OPTION.—The Secretary of Defense shall begin to offer the health benefits option under subsection (a) on January 1, 2001, with an initial open enrollment period conducted in the fall of 2000."

(2) The item relating to section 1108 in the table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended to read as follows:

"1108. Health care coverage through Federal Employees Health Benefits program."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 8905—

(A) by redesignating subsections (d) through (f) as subsections (e) through (g), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

"(d) Subject to subsection (e) of section 1108 of title 10, an individual whom an administering Secretary (as defined in section 1073 of such title) determines is a medicare-eligible covered beneficiary under subsection (b) of such section 1108 may enroll in a health benefits plan under this chapter in accordance with the agreement entered into under subsection (a) of such section 1108 between the Secretary of Defense and the Office and in accordance with applicable regulations under this chapter."

(2) in section 8906(b), by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following new paragraph (4):

"(4) In the case of individuals who enroll in a health plan in accordance with section 8905(d) of this title, the Government contribution shall be determined under section 1108(f) of title 10."

(3) in section 8906(g), by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following new paragraph (3):

"(3) The Government contribution described in subsection (b)(4) for beneficiaries who enroll in accordance with section 8905(d) of this title shall be paid as provided in section 1108(f) of title 10."

SEC. 6. ELIMINATION OF COPAYMENTS, DEDUCTIBLES, AND OTHER FEES FOR CARE FOR DEPENDENTS UNDER TRICARE PRIME.

(a) ELIMINATION.—Section 1097a of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsection (d):

"(d) PROHIBITION ON COPAYMENTS AND OTHER FEES FOR CARE FOR DEPENDENTS.—No copayment, deductible, annual fee, or other fee may be collected for or with respect to any medical care provided a dependent (as described in subparagraph (A), (D), or (I) of section 1072(2) of this title) of a member of the uniformed services who is enrolled in TRICARE Prime."

(b) CONFORMING AND CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—(1) The section heading of such section is amended by adding at the end the following: "; prohibition on fees for certain beneficiaries".

(2) The item relating to such section at the beginning of chapter 55 of such title is amended by inserting before the period the following: "; prohibition on fees for certain beneficiaries".

SEC. 7. HEALTH CARE COVERAGE OF IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS UNDER PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS ASSIGNED TO CERTAIN DUTY LOCATIONS FAR FROM CARE.

Section 1079 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(p)(1)(A) Subject to such exceptions as the Secretary of Defense considers necessary,

coverage for medical care under this section for the dependents referred to in subsection (a) of a member of the armed forces covered by section 1074(c) of this title who are residing with the member, and standards with respect to timely access to such care, shall be comparable to coverage for medical care and standards for timely access to such care under the managed care option of the TRICARE program known as TRICARE Prime.

"(B) No copayment, deductible, or annual fee may be collected for or with respect to any medical care provided a dependent under subparagraph (A).

"(2) The Secretary of Defense shall enter into arrangements with contractors under the TRICARE program or with other appropriate contractors for the timely and efficient processing of claims under this subsection.

"(3) The Secretary of Defense may not require dependents referred to in subsection (a) of a member of the armed forces described in section 1074(c)(3)(B) of this title to receive routine primary medical care at a military medical treatment facility."

SEC. 8. UNIFORMED SERVICES RETIREE HEALTH CARE ACCOUNT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§1110. Uniformed Services Retiree Health Care Account

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury an account to be known as 'Uniformed Services Retiree Health Care Account' (in this section referred to as the 'Account').

"(b) TRANSFERS TO ACCOUNT.—There shall be transferred to the Account any unexpired funds (as determined by the Secretary of Defense, after consultation with the other administering Secretaries) in the Defense Health Program account that, as a result of economies, efficiencies, and other savings achieved in the medical care and health care programs of the Department of Defense, are excess to the requirements of such programs.

"(c) USE OF FUNDS.—(1) Amounts in the Account may be used for purposes of covering the costs incurred by the Secretary of Defense and the other administering Secretaries in administering section 1108 of this title and the provisions of the Honoring Health Care Commitments to Servicemembers Past and Present Act of 2000 (including the amendments made by that Act).

"(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, amounts in the Account shall remain available until expended.

"(d) UNEXPIRED FUNDS DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'unexpired funds' means funds appropriated for a definite period of time that remain available for obligation."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"1110. Uniformed Services Retiree Health Care Account."

SEC. 9. CONTRACT AUTHORITY FOR RECOVERY OF OVERPAYMENTS UNDER THE TRICARE PROGRAM.

Section 1097b of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d) CONTRACT AUTHORITY FOR RECOVERY OF OVERPAYMENTS.—The Secretary of Defense may enter into contracts with appropriate private entities for purposes of recovering amounts of overpayments to health care providers under the TRICARE program. Services under contracts under this subsection may include audit services and such other services as the Secretary of Defense considers appropriate."

SEC. 10. ENHANCEMENT OF EFFICIENCY OF ADMINISTRATION OF MILITARY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, after consultation with the other administering Secretaries, shall take appropriate actions—

(1) to enhance the efficiency of administration of the provision of health care services under chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, including the TRICARE program, in matters relating to marketing, beneficiary enrollment, beneficiary and provider education, claims processing, and the scheduling of appointments; and

(2) otherwise to improve the quality of service provided under that chapter.

(b) PARTICULAR ACTIONS.—The actions taken by the Secretary of Defense under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Simplification of administrative processes.

(2) Use of the Internet for critical administrative processes.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section the terms “administering Secretaries” and “TRICARE program” shall have the meanings given such terms in section 1072 of title 10, United States Code.

SEC. 11. NATIONWIDE ENROLLMENT CARD UNDER THE TRICARE PROGRAM.

(a) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Defense, after consultation with the other administering Secretaries, shall issue to covered beneficiaries under the TRICARE program an enrollment card which shall serve as an enrollment card for participation in the TRICARE program nationwide. The purpose of the enrollment card is to facilitate the ready portability of benefits under the TRICARE program.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section the terms “administering Secretaries” and “TRICARE program” shall have the meanings given such terms in section 1072 of title 10, United States Code.

THE MILITARY COALITION,
Alexandria, VA, January 21, 2000.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of nationally prominent uniformed services and veterans associations representing more than five million current and former members of the uniformed services, plus their families and survivors, applauds your leadership in introducing comprehensive legislation aimed at correcting serious inequities in the military health care benefit.

The Coalition believes enactment of such comprehensive health care equity legislation is essential, not only to keep commitments to long-serving members who sacrificed so much, but also to rebuild the readiness of the current force. In this regard, broken health care promises have undermined one of the services' most potent recruiting resources—the enthusiasm of retired members to recommend service careers for their children and grandchildren and those of their friends and neighbors. The broken promises also hurt current force retention, as survey responses indicate that reenlistment-eligible members are increasingly aware of how poorly their predecessors are being treated.

We are grateful to you for introducing legislation that would keep promises to those who have already served and improve health care delivery to those currently in uniform. You legislation would accomplish TMC's longstanding health care equity goals by authorizing Medicare-eligibles an option to choose between coverage under TRICARE Senior Prime or TRICARE Senior Prime Remote, FEHBP-65, or DoD mail-order and retail pharmacy programs. Members who first

entered service before June 7, 1956 would be authorized to enroll themselves and their family members in DoD managed health care programs without any fees or copays. Active duty family members would be fully covered by Tricare Prime, without any copays, regardless of their duty location.

What you have proposed is the honorable thing to do, both to ensure retired members receive long-promised and badly needed health coverage in their senior years and to improve quality of life and retention among current and future active duty personnel. The Military Coalition looks forward to working with you and your staff in seeking to bring these important health care improvements to legislative reality.

Sincerely,

THE MILITARY COALITION.

Air Force Association.
Air Force Sergeants Association.
Army Aviation Assn. of America.
Assn. of Military Surgeons of the United States.
Assn. of the US Army.
Commissioned Officers Assn. of the US Public Health Service, Inc.
CWO & WO Assn. US Coast Guard.
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States.
Fleet Reserve Assn.
Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.
Jewish War Veterans of the USA.
Marine Corps League.
Marine Corps Reserve Officers Assn.
Military Order of the Purple Heart.
National Guard Assn. of the United States.
National Military Family Assn.
National Order of Battlefield Commissions.
Naval Reserve Assn.
Navy League of the United States.
Reserve Officers Assn.
Society of Medical Consultants to the Armed Forces.
The Military Chaplains Assn. of the USA.
The Retired Enlisted Assn.
The Retired Officers Assn.
United Armed Forces Assn.
USCG Chief Petty Officers Assn.
US Army Warrant Officers Assn.
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.
Veterans' Widows International Network, Inc.

NATIONAL MILITARY AND
VETERANS ALLIANCE,
January 25, 2000.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: The National Military and Veterans Alliance representing over 3.5 million military retirees and other veterans strongly supports your legislation, “Honoring Health Care Commitments to Service Members Past and Present Act of 2000.”

The bill reflects your longstanding interest in improving military health care and it offers superb options for the entire military family, retirees, active duty, their families and survivors. With the closure and realignment of over 100 domestic military bases since 1988, hundreds of thousands of military beneficiaries have been left with no Department of Defense sponsored health care. This bill will repair the broken health care promise to the nation's warriors and will reassure those considering a military career that the nation will honor its promises made to those who have served to keep our country free.

We applaud your leadership in introducing this comprehensive legislation, which would include Medicare eligible retirees who desperately need medical care and are the only Federal employees who lose their DoD sponsored health care at age 65. The options offered are critical to military beneficiaries

and include priority access to military treatment facilities and TRICARE Senior Prime networks, expansion of the Base Realignment and Closure pharmacy benefit, allows enrollment in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and establishes an accrual account for military health care as is done for other Federal retirees.

With additional base closings being recommended, each option in this legislation is essential. One size will not fit all beneficiaries and they need the maximum number of options to meet the varying needs of active duty, retirees, their families and survivors whatever their location or medical condition.

The nation does not have a surplus until all obligations are met. This bill will meet a major obligation of the Government and we thank you for introducing it.

Sincerely,

Air Force Sergeants Association; American Military Retirees Association; American Military Society; American Retirees Association; Catholic War Veterans; Class Act Group; Gold Star Wives of America; Korean War Veterans Association; Military Order of the Purple Heart; Legion of Valor; National Assn. for Uniformed Services; Naval Enlisted Reserve Association; Naval Reserve Association; Non Commissioned Officers Assn; Society of Medical Consultants; The Retired Enlisted Association; TREA Senior Citizen League; Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; Veterans of Foreign Wars; Women in Search of Equity.

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION,
Arlington, Virginia, January 25, 2000.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN,
Senate Russell Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN:
On behalf of the 150,000 members of the Air Force Association, I want to thank you for taking the lead in the Senate to enact legislation to restore affordable, portable and accessible health care for our nation's military members, their families and our retirees. I am confident your legislative actions on this bill will have a long-term, positive affect on the morale, welfare and retention of those who now serve on active duty and will keep faith with those now retired.

While I know other Members of the Senate are planning to introduce similar legislation, your very comprehensive bill has set a high standard for others to follow. I also am pleased to see that the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) will make military health care reform their number one personnel-related issue this year. The majority of the concerns raised by the JCS are pointedly addressed in your legislation.

We want to work with you to get this bill enacted into law. Please let us know how we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

THOMAS J. MCKEE.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
UNIFORMED SERVICES,
Springfield, VA, January 25, 2000.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: The National Association for Uniformed Services and The Society of Military Widows with membership encompassing all grades, ranks, family members and survivors of all seven uniformed services strongly support your legislation, “Honoring Health Care Commitments to Service Members Past and Present Act of 2000.”

We applaud your leadership in introducing this most comprehensive legislation which will improve access to health care for every

category of military member, active duty, retired, family member and survivor.

This bill will repair the broken health care promise to the nation's warriors and will reassure those considering a military career that the nation will honor its promises made to those who have served to keep our country free. This legislation includes Medicare eligible retirees who desperately need medical care and are the only Federal employees who lose their DoD sponsored health care at age 65. The options offered are critical to military beneficiaries and include priority access to military treatment facilities and TRICARE Senior Prime networks, expansion of the Base Realignment and Closure pharmacy benefit, allows enrollment in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and establishes an accrual account for military health care as is done for other Federal retirees.

Each option in this legislation is essential. Beneficiaries need the maximum number of choices to meet the varying needs of active duty, retirees, their families and survivors whatever their location or medical condition.

This bill reflects your longstanding commitment to a strong national defense and the men and women who make that defense possible. It also will meet a major obligation of the Government and we thank you for introducing it.

Sincerely,

RICHARD D. MURRAY,
*Major General, USAF (Ret),
President, NAUS and Administrator, SMW.*

—
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2000.

CHRIS PAUL,
c/o JOHN S. MCCAIN III.

I am delighted that Senator John McCain has signed on to H.R. 2966. This is a giant step toward repairing the breach of contract by this Administration.

Furthermore, the McCain bill goes further to improve the health care delivery system for active duty servicemembers and their families and also repairs the "broken promise" for military retirees and their families.

COL. GEORGE "BUD" DAY,
Attorney for WWII-Korean Vets.

£

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 74

At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 74, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages

on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 92

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ROBB) was added as a cosponsor of S. 92, a bill to provide for biennial budget process and a biennial appropriations process and to enhance oversight and the performance of the Federal Government.

S. 242

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 242, a bill to amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act to require the labeling of imported meat and meat food products.

S. 820

At the request of Mr. L. CHAFEE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 820, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the 4.3-cent motor fuel excise taxes on railroads and inland waterway transportation which remain in the general fund of the Treasury.

S. 851

At the request of Mr. L. CHAFEE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 851, a bill to allow Federal employees to take advantage of the transportation fringe benefit provisions of the Internal Revenue Code that are available to private sector employees.

S. 1055

At the request of Mr. INOUE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1055, a bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to designate the day before Thanksgiving as "National Day of Reconciliation."

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. MOYNIHAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. ABRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1708, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require plans which adopt amendments that significantly reduce future benefit accruals to provide participants with adequate notice of the changes made by such amendments.

S. 1999

At the request of Mr. MACK, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1999, a bill for the relief of Elian Gonzalez-Brotons.

S. 2003

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ROBB) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2003, a bill to restore health care coverage to retired members of the uniformed services.

£

JOINT SESSION OF THE TWO HOUSES—ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 106-160)

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will proceed to the Hall of the House of Representatives to hear the address by the President of the United States.

Thereupon, the Senate, preceded by the Assistant Sergeant at Arms, Loretta Symms, the Secretary of the Senate, Gary Sisco, and the Vice President of the United States, ALBERT GORE, Jr., proceeded to the Hall of the House of Representatives to hear the address by the President of the United States, William J. Clinton.

(The address delivered by the President of the United States to the joint session of the two Houses of Congress appears in the proceedings of the House of Representatives in today's RECORD).

£

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
JANUARY 31, 2000

At the conclusion of the joint session of the two Houses, and in accordance with the order previously entered, at 10:52 p.m., the Senate adjourned until Monday, January 31, 2000, at 12 noon.

£

NOMINATION

Executive nomination received by the Senate January 27, 2000:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

NANCY KILLEFER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS. (NEW POSITION)