

My concern, Mr. President, is that if we do not have tough, uniform work requirements, States will have every incentive to come up with reasons that these target rates are not achievable. As it now stands, States know what is expected of them, and they are given five years to meet these targets. And we have made a number of changes to facilitate their task. To have accepted this amendment would have set us back considerably from our goal to have people on welfare performing real work. For that reason, I could not support the Graham amendment.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I believe the Senate's passage of this legislation was a momentous occasion. It marked, I think, a watershed in our approach to social policy in this Nation. There were a number of considerable accomplishments in this measure.

We were able to end the "entitlement" status of welfare benefits. The American people have made it clear that they want a welfare system which does more than simply provide government hand-outs. They expect something from the recipient in return—self-discipline, a work ethic, personal responsibility. But it is practically impossible to have real welfare reform without the ability to sanction those recipients who fail to abide by the terms of the program.

As long as welfare is treated as an entitlement—essentially a right and not a benefit—the courts have ruled that the same due process rights exists for the welfare recipient as for a homeowner or property owner. In fact, some would argue it would be easier for the Government to take your property away. Without this legislation, sanctioning recipients who refuse to work will be administratively unduly burdensome if not impossible.

The second major achievement of the welfare bill was to erect a strong work requirement for States to use in developing their programs. We started by giving States difficult targets to reach in the form of work participation rates among welfare recipients—and without exemptions. Exemptions only serve to exaggerate the number of people working in any State. We then crafted a strict definition of what constitutes work so that we could be confident that the States had genuine work programs. Other than those parameters, Mr. President, we tell the States that they are free to determine by themselves how they wish to meet those targets.

Third, while the Senate did not go as far as many people wished, we took a sizable and laudable first step toward addressing the crisis of illegitimacy. We made illegitimacy a core feature of the welfare reform bill, and we gave States a carrot and stick. The carrot comes in the form of the illegitimacy ratio bonus. The stick, I believe, is the inevitability of Congress taking much more drastic, prescriptive actions if States fail to effectively combat their out-of-wedlock birth rates.

Finally, the bill gives the States tremendous latitude and flexibility in designing and running the programs we are block granting and sending back to them. That is critical if the block grant approach is to ever succeed.

For years, many of us have said that the Federal Government does not have all the answers. We have repeatedly proclaimed that too often bureaucrats in Washington have actually created many of our problems or were hindrances to others' attempts at finding solutions.

Mr. President, this Senator simply does not believe that government at any level—Federal, State or local—has the resources or the ingenuity to solve all of our Nation's social problems. That is especially true when we are talking about many of the issues related to welfare reform: illegitimacy, child care, education and job training, paternity establishment and child support.

If all we ask of our welfare system is to provide a safety net for people who have fallen on hard times, then we can content ourselves with Government merely getting money or goods into peoples' hands. However, if we want our welfare system to be one in which individuals needing assistance are given the tools and the opportunities to get off welfare and never return, the assistance we provide has to be more than simply a government hand-out.

To accomplish this will require input from a whole host of other institutions in our society beyond government—our churches, our schools, our businesses, our civic associations—in essence, our entire community. For too many years, Government has seen itself as the sole purveyor of opportunity for the less fortunate and, in the process, has stifled the efforts of other institutions desirous of sharing the workload. With the passage of this welfare reform bill, we are telling Government that it must begin to share the responsibilities and the resources with other partners in this endeavor.

That is why I believe the legislation we passed last week is such a tremendous accomplishment. I trust the conferees will work diligently to come up with a similarly tough and balanced measure, one that most of us can wholeheartedly support.●

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment today to mark the 30th anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts. Thirty years ago, President Lyndon Johnson initiated a program which gave the government a modest role in bringing the arts and culture to all the people of our great nation. Today, 30 years later, this small investment is being called into question, ignoring that the National Endowment for the Arts has made a substantial contribution to the

cultural lives of Americans in all corners of the nation. The NEA has lived up to the purposes for which Congress established, specifically, "to ensure that the arts and humanities belong to all people of the United States." This has been no small achievement, and is one which the Endowment can stake claim to—broadening accessibility and increasing the breadth of participation.

For much of our Nation's history, one had to travel to the biggest cities—New York, Chicago, Boston or Los Angeles—to participate and enjoy the best of what the arts had to offer. This is no longer the case. The Endowment has encouraged a real flowering of the arts across the nation and provided the seeds for each community to celebrate its uniqueness and its creativity. While one could not say that the Endowment is the creator of art—certainly the arts would exist and have existed without it—one can safely say it has been a catalyst for ensuring that the very best of the arts are available to even the smallest corner of the nation and to all segments of the population.

All across America, millions of children and their families have had the chance to see the great masterpieces of the visual arts, hear the masterworks of American composers, and read the novels and stories and poems of America's great writers. The gift of the Endowment to our Nation is realized by each person, young and old, whose horizon is broadened through dancing and writing, whose self esteem is reinforced through participation in the arts, who is able to communicate through creating. Bringing the magic and wonder of the arts to all of us, is the triumph of the NEA.

Mr. President, on this 30th anniversary, I would also like to take a moment to pay tribute to one of the founding fathers of the NEA, the distinguished senior Senator from Rhode Island, CLAIRBORNE PELL, who has been a true champion of the arts. He, too, should be recognized on this anniversary for his extraordinary contributions. As a long time supporter of this agency and sponsor of legislation to reauthorize the National Endowment for the Arts in 1995, I am proud to come to the Senate floor and make note of this special day.

Now that it appears that the Endowment is secure, I would like to thank all my colleagues who helped through this difficult time. We should not allow for controversy to overshadow this agency's great accomplishments. It is my hope that the National Endowment for the Arts will continue to serve the American public well into the next century.●

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 908

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader, after consultation with the Democratic leader and after the managers of the bill have agreed on the