

African-American leaders. Many of those leaders have been seen as leaders of the African-American community. Ron Brown was intensely loyal to his African-American roots, but, like Colin Powell, he was also a national leader, an American leader who was clearly understood, in his great energetic way, to be battling for the well-being of every American.

In his struggle to save the Commerce Department over the last year, Ron Brown often compared the abolition of the Department to unilateral disarmament in the international economic wars of today. In closing, I note that all around our city of Washington are statues of our great military heroes. Now we are engaged in a different kind of global conflict: an economic global conflict. If we ever start building statues for those who have served courageously and with great success in this economic battle for the opportunity and the well-being of our people, we ought to erect a statue to Ron Brown as one of the finest of those leaders.●

THE MARK AND GARY BEEF PLEDGE

● Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, cattle producers in my State of Iowa and across the country are facing substantial economic hardship. Record-high grain and feed costs, low hay reserves, drought conditions, and an oversupply of beef are compounding the problem of a 10-year-low cattle market. I am pleased the administration has taken to heart our proposals to assist the sagging cattle market. Allowing haying and grazing on CRP acres is necessary to alleviate the high feed costs and a large beef purchase by the U.S. Government should help turn the tide.

Speaking of helping to turn the tide, a farm broadcasting duo in central Iowa has embarked on a campaign to promote beef consumption in the State of Iowa. Gary Wergin and Mark Pearson of WHO-Radio in Des Moines, IA are calling on their Heartland listeners to take a pledge. As one who proudly and easily accepted their challenge to eat just one more serving of beef a week, I submit "The Mark and Gary Beef Pledge" into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. By working together, Iowans can make a difference.

The material follows:

THE MARK AND GARY BEEF PLEDGE

I, Chuck Grassley, am a proud consumer of beef be it broiled, roasted or grilled. I respect the efforts of all those, from the farm to the supermarket, who make American beef the safest in the world. At this time of low prices, I can help in the most delightful way . . . by consuming more beef. I therefore pledge to boost my beef consumption by one serving per week, while staying within dietary guidelines.

CHUCK GRASSLEY.●

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

THE CHOIR FROM KENTUCKY

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, in Appalachia in a community and a county called Harlan, there is a group of young men who now for decades—some have fathers that sang in this choir, and their sons are now singing in this choir. They all donate their time. The director of this choral group donates his time. It is after everything else is done.

They have won international honors without much fanfare, without much publicity. But we know them, and we love them. In 1988, they were here to sing at the inauguration. They sang for the inauguration, the Kentucky Society, the Bullets basketball game, and they kind of took this town by storm. Everybody liked them when they found out about them, like I do.

Mr. President, this group is back in town. They are here visiting Washington again. I know the policy and rules of the committee. I can go only so far. But I want it to be in the RECORD that this group is here, and I want my colleagues to know how important they are to me, and to our State.

So, Mr. President, if any of you see some young men, fine young men, walking around this town, or walking around this Capitol Building—they have on light green T-shirts—I hope that you will walk up to them and thank them for their contribution to something that is real, something that is tangible, and something that is lasting.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BURNS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Montana.

Mr. BURNS. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. BURNS pertaining to the introduction of S. 1726 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. BRADLEY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from New Jersey.

NEWBORNS' AND MOTHERS' HEALTH PROTECTION ACT OF 1996

Mr. BRADLEY. Mr. President, in 10 days it will be Mother's Day. This means something precious to mothers, grandmothers, and expectant mothers in this country. I, along with many others, also think it means something special to the Senate. It is our opportunity to take up and pass the Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act of 1996.

I have several letters with me today. These were addressed to the majority leader and the minority leader of the Senate. Each letter respectfully requests that a date for Senate floor ac-

tion and a vote on the newborns bill be scheduled as soon as possible. This is what we can do for mothers and their families this Mother's Day.

Let me remind us all of the history of the newborns bill. Last year, many of us began to hear disturbing stories about mothers and babies being forced to leave the hospital too soon after childbirth.

While we can all agree that sometimes it makes good medical sense for mothers and babies to go home quickly, we have to recognize that, tragically, many times it is not good sense. We have been moved and saddened to learn of the deaths of babies and of serious and sometimes lifelong threats to their health and normal development that come from leaving the hospital too soon after childbirth.

Many of us began to hear that the decision about whether or not a mother and her baby should leave the hospital was being made by the wrong people. We began to hear that those who should make this decision, the doctor or the health care practitioner attending the mother and baby, were in fact not making that decision. Instead, the decision forcing a woman to leave the hospital in less than 24 hours after childbirth was being made by a clerk at an insurance company shaving costs and shortening lives.

I think many of us began to realize that this was the moment in a situation just like this when Government should step in to try to provide protection to mothers and babies. We all know the health care environment has changed, and changed with startling speed, over the last couple of years. Such a massive, fast change, even when positive, always creates instability and temporary imbalances. On occasion, it creates a serious problem. This is a serious problem—forcing women out of hospitals after giving childbirth in less than 24 hours.

With this background, Senator KASSEBAUM and I introduced the Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act, S. 969, about a year ago—last June. This is a bill that respects the authority of doctors and other health care practitioners, in consultation with mothers, to make health care decisions about the length of time their patient should stay in the hospital following childbirth. This is a bill that respects the flexibility that health plans need to manage care efficiently in our rapidly changing health care environment.

Mr. President, the newborns act creates what my colleague and cosponsor on this bill, Doctor and Senator FRIST has called a safe haven of time—a safe haven of time for doctors, mothers, and babies, 48 hours minimum for normal childbirth, 96 hours minimum for Cesarean sections. Under this bill, doctors, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, and nurses will all be free to do their job. Mothers will be relieved of the fear that they may be sent home too early before their babies are stable and they are prepared physically and emotionally. Newborns will be watched