gives America leverage against countries that shut out our exporters for political reasons.

This is important for all of America's exporters, who benefit from having a level playing field. It is especially important for American farmers. This bill will give our negotiators an important new tool to use as they oppose the unjustified actions of State trading enterprises around the world. It will help us get American dairy products into New Zealand and American wheat into Canada.

But its most important effect will be in regard to China. China is an enormous and growing market. As China emerges economically, we must do all we can to bring China into the world trading system as a full partner. If we want our exporters to do business in China's emerging market, we need to ensure that China plays by all the rules of trade that govern the rest of the world.

The discussions about China's accession to the World Trade Organization are ongoing. I strongly believe China must accept all obligations that WTO membership entails. That includes letting the market, not the politicians, control its trading decisions. China must dismantle its remaining State Trading Enterprises—especially the enterprise that controls the import of wheat into the country.

American farmers—especially our wheat producers—need full and free access to China's market. This bill gives our trade negotiators a small but important tool to help ensure that will happen.

I urge my colleagues to support it.

By Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself, Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN, Mr. INOUYE and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 487. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to employment opportunities in the Department of Health and Human Services for women who are scientists, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

THE HHS WOMEN SCIENTIST EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I introduce the HHS Women Scientist Employment Opportunity Act. What this bill does is quite simple. It will require all agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services to establish policies to ensure employment opportunities for women scientists within the Department. It will ensure a fair break for the many dedicated women scientists serving at the National Institutes of Health, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, and other agencies or offices in the Department. Policies are to be reviewed regularly and revised if necessary.

This bill is about the promoting equality. It is about supporting and advancing the careers of women scientists. It is about our Government leading the way in setting an example for both academia and industry on career policies for women scientists.

In 1992, it came to my attention that women scientists at the National Institutes of Health were not being treated fairly. Women scientists at NIH indicated that they were not being given research and conference assignments that would help advance their careers. They were not being adequately recognized for their accomplishments. Publication opportunities were limited. Questions were raised about tenure and comparability of pay with male colleagues.

Legislation was introduced in the 103d and 104th Congresses to address these concerns. I am encouraged that NIH voluntarily adopted some of the provisions outlined in these bills. But, this is only a start. We must continue to address the equity issues and policies impacting career advancement of our best and brightest women scientists. These issues deserve our utmost attention. That is why this bill is so important. It will ensure that the policies are in place to promote career opportunities for women scientists. And, it will ensure that policies are reviewed regularly, that progress is monitored and that policies are revised if necessary.

What I like about this bill is that it addresses a problem in our own backyard. It says we in the Federal Government have a problem, and we are going to fix it. It ensures that our women scientists working at HHS are treated fairly. It serves as a model for the private sector by setting the stage for equity among our career scientists. It shows that we are very serious about equity and fair play in the scientific community. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the HHS Women Scientist Employment Opportunity Act. ●

By Mr. KYL:

S. 488. A bill to control crime, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

THE CRIME PREVENTION ACT OF 1997

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Crime Prevention Act of 1997. One of the most important responsibilities for the 105th Congress is to pass a tough comprehensive crime measure that will restore law and order to America's streets. Reported crime may have decreased slightly over the past few years, but the streets are still too dangerous. Too many Americans are afraid to go out for fear of being robbed, assaulted, or murdered. In fact, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics report ''Highlights from 20 Years of Surveying Crime Victims,'' approximately 2 million people are injured a year as a result of violent crime. Of those who are injured, more than half require some level of medical treatment and nearly a quarter receive treatment in a hospital emergency room or require hospitalization.

THE CRIME CLOCK IS TICKING

The picture painted by crime statistics is frightening. According to the Uniform Crime Reports released by the Department of Justice, in 1995 there was: A violent crime every 18 seconds; a murder every 24 minutes; a forcible rape every 5 minutes; a robbery every 54 seconds; an aggravated assault every 29 seconds; a property crime every 3 seconds; a burglary every 12 seconds; and a motor vehicle theft every 21 seconds.

In short, a crime index offense occurred every 2 seconds. And this is just reported crime.

STATISTICS

Again, according to the Uniform Crime Reports in 1994, there were 1,798,785 violent crimes reported to law enforcement, a rate of 684.6 violent crimes per 100,000 inhabitants. The 1995 total was about 40 percent above that of 1985.

Additionally, in 1995 there were: 21,957 murders, a rate of 8.2 per 100,000 inhabitants; 580,545 robberies, a rate of 220.9 per 100,000 inhabitants; 2,594,995 burglaries, a rate of 987.6 per 100,000 inhabitants; 1,099,179 aggravated assaults, a rate of 418.3 per 100,000 inhabitants; and 97,464 rapes, a rate of 37.1 per 100,000 inhabitants.

Further, juvenile crime is skyrocketing. According to statistics compiled by the FBI, from 1985 to 1993 the number of homicides committed by males aged 18 to 24 increased 65 percent, and by males aged 14 to 17 increased 165 percent. In addition, according to the Department of Justice, during 1993, the youngest age group surveyed—those 12 to 15 years old—had the greatest risk of being the victims of violent crimes.

THE HEAVY COST OF CRIME

Aside from the vicious personal toll exacted, crime also has a devastating effect on the economy of our country. To fight crime, the United States spends about $90 billion a year on the entire criminal justice system. Crime is especially devastating to our cities, which often have crime rates several times higher than suburbs.

A Washington Post article detailed the work of Professors Mark Levitt and Mark Cohen in estimating the real cost of crime to society. According to the article, ''[i]nstead of merely toting up the haul in armed robberies or burglaries, Cohen tallied all of the costs associated with various kinds of crime, from loss of income sustained by a murder victim's family to the cost of counseling a rape victim to the diminished value of houses in high-burglary neighborhoods.'' These ''quality of life'' costs raise the cost of crime considerably. Cohen and Levitt calculated that one murder costs society on average $2.7 million. A robbery nets the robber an average of $2,900 in actual cash, but it produces $14,900 in ''quality of life'' expenses. And while the actual monetary loss caused by an assault is $1,800,

it produces $10,200 in ''quality of life'' expenses.

LEGISLATION

Fighting crime must be a top priority. Few would dispute this. According to a poll conducted for Reuters by the New York-based John Zogby Group that was released on January 31, 1997, voters rank crime as the most important issue. Further, according to an article in the July 19, 1995 Tucson Citizen, about 500 business, education, and government leaders in Tucson ranked crime as the number one issue in a survey commissioned by the Greater Tucson Economic Council. Also, according to a November 6, 1996 article in The Arizona Daily Star, Arizonans rank crime as one of the most important issues.

Given the magnitude of the problem of crime in our society, I believe that it is important to consider a comprehensive crime package. My bill has solid reforms that should blunt the forecasted explosion in crime. I would like to take this opportunity to outline of the provisions included in the Crime Prevention Act of 1997.

VICTIM RIGHTS AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Women are the victims of more than 4.5 million violent crimes a year, including half a million rapes or other sexual assaults, according to the Department of Justice. The National Victim Center calculates that a woman is battered every 15 seconds. A message must be sent to abusers that their behavior is not a ''family matter.'' Society should treat domestic violence as seriously as it does violence between strangers. My bill will strengthen the rights of domestic violence victims in Federal court and, hopefully, set a standard for the individual States to emulate.

First, my bill authorizes the death penalty for cases in which a woman is murdered by her husband or boyfriend. Courts will not, under this bill, be able to exclude evidence of a defendant's violent disposition toward the victim as impermissible ''character'' evidence. My bill also provides that if a defendant presents negative character evidence concerning the victim, the government's rebuttal can include negative character evidence concerning the defendant. It makes clear that testimony regarding battered women's syndrome is admissible to explain the behavior of victims of violence.

We must establish a higher standard of professional conduct for lawyers. My legislation prohibits harassing or dilatory tactics, knowingly presenting false evidence or discrediting truthful evidence, willful ignorance of matters that could be learned from the client, and concealment of information necessary to prevent sexual abuse or other violent crimes.

Violence in our society leaves law-abiding citizens feeling defenseless. It is time to level the playing field. Federal law currently gives the defense more chances than the prosecution to reject a potential juror. My bill protects the right of victims to an impartial jury by giving both sides the same number of peremptory challenges.

The 1994 Crime Act included a provision requiring notice to State and local authorities concerning the release of Federal violent offenders. Under the act, notice can only be used for law-enforcement purposes. The Justice Department opposes this limitation because it disallows other legitimate uses of the information, such as warning potential victims of the offender's return to the community. My bill would delete this restriction.

It is our responsibility to continue to work to combat violent crime, wherever it occurs. Titles I and II take an important step toward protecting the rights of crime victims, curbing domestic violence, and removing violent offenders from our streets and communities.

FIREARMS

Almost 30 percent of all violent crimes are committed through the use of a firearm, either to intimidate the victim into submission or to injure the victim, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. And 70 percent of all murders committed were accomplished through the use of a firearm. To help stop this violence the bill increases the mandatory minimum sentences for criminals who use firearms in the commission of crimes. It imposes the following minimum penalties: 10 years for using or carrying a firearm during the commission of a Federal crime of violence or drug trafficking crime; 20 years if the firearm is discharged; incarceration for life or punishment by death if death a person results.

THE EXCLUSIONARY RULE

To ensure that relevant evidence is not kept from juries, the bill extends the ''good faith'' exception to the exclusionary rule to non-warrant cases, where the court determines that the circumstances justified an objectively reasonable belief by officers that their conduct was lawful.

THE DEATH PENALTY

The vast majority of the American public supports the option of the death penalty. A Gallup poll conducted in April 1996 found that 79 percent of Americans support the death penalty, and an ABC News/Washington Post poll conducted in January 1995 found that 74 percent of Americans favor the death penalty for persons convicted of murder.

To deter crime and to make a clear statement that the most vicious, evil behavior will not be tolerated in our society, the bill strengthens Federal death penalty standards and procedures. It requires defendant to give notice of mitigating factors that will be relied on in a capital sentencing hearing—just as the Government is now required to give notice of aggravating factors—adds use of a firearm in committing a killing as an aggravating factor that permits a jury to consider the death penalty, and directs the jury to impose a capital sentence if aggravating factors outweigh mitigating factors.

HABEAS CORPUS

To eliminate the abuse, delay, and repetitive litigation in the lower Federal courts title VI of this bill provides that the decisions of State courts will not be subject to review in the lower Federal courts, so long as there are adequate and effective remedies in the State courts for testing the legality of a person's detention. This provision limits the needless duplicative review in the lower Federal courts, and helps put a stop to the endless appeals of convicted criminals. Judge Robert Bork has written a letter in support of this provision.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUBPOENA

The bill allows high-ranking Secret Service agents to issue an administrative subpoena for information in cases in which a person's life is in danger. The Department of Agriculture, the Resolution Trust Corporation, and the Food and Drug Administration already have administrative subpoena power. The Secret Service should have it to protect the lives of American citizens.

CONCLUSION

The Kyl crime bill is an important effort in the fight against crime. We can win this fight, if we have the conviction, and keep the pressure on Congress to pass tough crime-control measures. It is time to stop kowtowing to prisoners, apologists for criminals, and the defense lawyers, and pass a strong crime bill.

By Mr. KYL (for himself and Mr. REID):

S. 489. A bill to improve the criminal law relating to fraud against consumers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

THE TELEMARKETING FRAUD PREVENTION ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am proud to be an original cosponsor to the Telemarketing Fraud Prevention Act. Unfortunately, my State of Nevada has the highest rate of bogus telemarketing operations in the Nation. I have been involved over the last few years with uncovering these scams. We held a hearing last year in the Special Aging Committee to call attention to this crime, which primarily targets seniors. At the time of the hearing I called these scams electric muggings, and stated that Congress needs to treat these telephone thugs like criminals on the street who attack and steal. This act aims to do just that.

Nationwide these phone schemes cost consumers over $60 billion a year. As I stated earlier, Nevada has the highest rate of fraudulent telemarketing operations. But Kathryn Landreth, U.S. attorney for Nevada, has been working with the Department of Justice to break up these schemes. Last year they rounded up over 200 fraudulent operators in Las Vegas. Nevada AARP members served as decoys for the sting, and I again commend them for doing so.

Sadly, victims of telemarketing fraud are most often our senior citizens. These white-collar thugs who cheat victims out of their hard-earned money, are swindlers who choose to satisfy their greed by bilking others instead of doing an honest day's work. These thugs not only rob their victims of their financial security, but also of their dignity. Many older Americans live alone, may have just lost their spouse, and are particularly vulnerable to con-artists who act like they are their friends. One of the telemarketers prosecuted by the U.S. attorney of Nevada's office collected obituaries from various newspapers so that he could take advantage of recent widows and widowers.

Typical schemes involve the telemarketer promising thousands of dollars, free vacations, or new cars if the victim buys a fur coat or overpriced vitamins, for example. If a victim receives anything at all in return for the money sent to the telemarketer, the items are generally worth far less than represented; in some cases they are no more than worthless junk.

Not only do we need vigilant law enforcement and tough punishments, but we need to inform people. We have to get the message out to people, especially seniors, to be wary of offerings over the phone and hang up when asked for money. Further, they should report the incident to the U.S. attorney's office. Hopefully, strengthening the punishment for these crimes will deter others from entering the arena, but it is extremely important to follow up on this act with enforcement and information.

By Mr. AKAKA:

S. 490. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to adjust for inflation the dollar limitations on the dependent care credit; to the Committee on Finance.

THE WORKING FAMILIES CHILD CARE TAX RELIEF ACT OF 1997

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing legislation that I have sponsored in the past two Congresses to provide a measure of tax relief to working families throughout America. My bill would restore value to the child and dependent care credit by allowing an annual adjustment of the credit for inflation.

Mr. President, as the Federal Government and the states work to move people from welfare to work, the problems faced by working Americans seeking affordable, quality child-care services for their children will likely worsen. The availability and affordability of adequate child care are the principal concerns expressed by an increasing number of middle-class working parents. Many parents are forced to patch together a network of child care providers to secure care for their children.

The evidence in support of improving the child and dependent care credit is clear. The number of single mothers working outside the home has dramatically increased in recent years. More than 56 percent of all mothers with children under 6 years work outside the home, and over 70 percent of women with children over age 6 are in the labor market.

The percentage of Hawaii households in which both parents work outside the home is even higher than the national average. According to projections developed by the Bank of Hawaii based on the 1990 Census, 61.8 percent of all Hawaii families have both parents employed, and 71.3 percent of all households have at least two individuals in the workforce.

The increased participation of single mothers in the labor market and the large number of two-parent families in which both parents work outside the home have made the dependent care credit one of the most popular and productive tax incentives ever enacted by Congress. Unfortunately, the value of the credit has declined significantly over the years as inflation has slowly eaten away at the value of this benefit. Measured in constant dollars, the maximum credit of $2,400 has decreased in value by more than 45 percent since 1982.

In 1981, the flat credit for dependent care was replaced with a scale to give the greatest benefit of the credit to lower income working families. Since that time, neither the adjusted gross income figures employed in the scale, nor the limit on the amount of employment-related expenses used to calculate the credit, has been adjusted for inflation. My bill provides a measure of much needed relief to working American families. It would index the child and dependent care credit and restore the full benefit of the credit.

The maximum amount of employment-related child care expenses allowed under current law—$2,400 for a single child and $4,800 for two or more children—has simply failed to keep pace with escalating care costs. Unlike other tax credits and deductions provided taxpayers in the Internal Revenue Code, the dependent care credit is not adjusted for inflation.

Without an adjustment for inflation, we will continue to diminish the purpose of this credit to offset the expense of dependent and child care services incurred by parents working outside the home. While the cost of quality child care has increased as demand exceeds supply, the dependent care credit has failed to keep up with the spiraling costs. My legislation addresses this chronic problem by automatically adjusting the dependent and child care credit for inflation. Under this legislation, both the dollar limit on the amount creditable and the limitation on earned income would be adjusted annually.

Mr. President, the average cost for out of home child care exceeds $3,500 per child, per year. Child care or dependent care expenses can seriously strain a family's budget. This burden can become unbearable for single parents, almost invariably single mothers, who must balance the need to work with their parental responsibilities.

Middle-class Americans are working harder than ever to maintain their standard of living. In many families, parents have been forced to work longer hours, deplete their savings, and go deeper into debt. There is an urgent need to enact changes in our tax code that are pro-family and pro-children. The Working Families Child Care Tax Relief Act meets both of these goals.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 490

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 ''Working Families Child Care Tax Relief Act''.

SEC. 2. INFLATION ADJUSTMENT OF DEPENDENT CARE CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (e) of section 21 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to expenses for household and dependent care services necessary for gainful employment) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(11) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—In the case of any taxable year beginning in a calendar year after 1996, each dollar amount contained in subsections (c) and (d)(2) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

''(A) such dollar amount, multiplied by

''(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins, by substituting 'calendar year 1995' for 'calendar year 1992' in subparagraph (B) thereof.''

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 1996.

By Mr. FORD:

S. 491. A bill to amend the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 to prohibit the United States Fish and Wildlife Service from acquiring land to establish a refuge of the National Wildlife Refuge System unless at least 50 percent of the owners of the land in the proposed refuge favor the acquisition; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT ACT OF 1997

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, last month in western Kentucky, about 200 citizens of Marshall County packed a junior high school auditorium, taking time out from their busy schedules, to learn more about the proposed Clarks River Wildlife Refuge. So many people were there because it marked the first time they had an opportunity to voice their opinions on a refuge that would go, literally, through their backyards. Backers of the refuge had crafted a proposal and sought funding without any input from the people who owned the land.

I first called the Senate's attention to this refuge last year, during consideration of the omnibus appropriations bill. I made it clear that I'm not necessarily opposed to the creation of a

wildlife refuge in western Kentucky. What concerned me then and concerns me now is that those who farm about 7,000 acres within the proposed boundaries of the refuge haven't been heard on whether they support the refuge. As one farmer said to me in a letter last year, ''no one seems to listen to what the majority of the landowners and farmers, who are directly involved, are saying.''

Well, Mr. President, I'm listening. During last month's hearing, one farmer asked for a show of hands, of the landowners present, who supported the refuge. Three hands went up. When he asked how many landowners opposed the refuge, about 60 hands went up. What's worse, when a farmer asked how many landowners had been contacted to determine support for the refuge, the Government officials admitted that not a single landowner had been contacted—despite the fact that the creation of the refuge will depend solely on the number of willing sellers.

Today I am introducing legislation to correct this practice. My bill would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to contact for an independent, non-biased survey of landowners within the boundaries of any proposed refuge. If the survey shows that a majority of the landowners support the refuge, then the Service would be free to proceed with land acquisitions to create it. If not, then the Service would be prohibited from taking additional steps.

Mr. President, my bill is simply common sense: Creating a wildlife refuge depends on the willingness of landowners to sell their property to the Federal Government. We should first determine if there are enough landowners willing to sell enough land to actually create the refuge before we begin to make purchases. It doesn't make sense to draw up plans for a wildlife refuge if there won't be enough land available to create it.

Mr. President, the people of western Kentucky have asked, repeatedly, for their voices to be heard. My legislation will ensure that they will be, and that future refuges respect the wishes of affected communities.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 491

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

SECTION 1. LANDOWNER REFERENDA ON REFUGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4 of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) LANDOWNER REFERENDA ON REFUGES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Before acquiring land to establish a refuge of the System or preparing a final environmental assessment or environmental impact statement on the proposed acquisition under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Secretary shall—

''(A) hold a public hearing on the proposed acquisition in the area in which the land proposed to be acquired is located; and

''(B) acting through a private, independent entity, conduct a referendum among owners of the land that will be acquired to establish the refuge to determine whether the owners favor the proposed acquisition.

''(2) APPROVAL OF ACQUISITION.—The Secretary may acquire land to establish a refuge of the System only if a majority of owners of the land voting in the referendum favor the proposed acquisition.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) takes effect on October 1, 1996.

By Mr. SARBANES:

S. 492. A bill to amend certain provisions of title 5, United States Code, in order to ensure equality between Federal firefighters and other employees in the civil service and other public sector firefighters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

THE FIREFIGHER PAY FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, today I am introducing legislation to improve the pay system used for Federal firefighters. This bill has three broad purposes: First, to improve pay equality with municipal and other public section firefighters; second, to enhance recruitment and retention of firefighters in order to maintain the highest quality Federal fire service; and third, to encourage Federal firefighters to pursue career advancement and training opportunities.

Fire protection is clearly a major concern at Federal facilities and on Federal lands throughout the Nation. From fighting wildland fires in our national parks and forests to protecting military families from fires in their base housing, Federal firefighters play a vital role in preserving lives and property. One only needs to recall the terrible tragedies in Colorado two summers ago to understand the vital importance of our Federal firefighters.

The Department of Agriculture, the Coast Guard, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, the Department of the Interior, and the Department of Veterans Affairs are among the Federal agencies which rely on Federal fire fighters to protect their vast holdings of land and structures. Just like their municipal counterparts, these firefighters are the first line of defense against threats to life and property.

Mr. President, the current system used to pay our Federal firefighters is at best confusing and at worst unfair. These men and women work longer hours than any other public sector firefighters—yet are paid substantially less. The current pay system, which consists of three tiers, is overly complex and, more importantly, is hurting Federal efforts to attract and retain top-quality employees.

Currently, most Federal firefighters work an average 72-hour week under exceptionally demanding conditions. The typical workweek consists of a one-day-off schedule which results in three 24-hours shifts during the remainder of each week. Despite this unusual schedule, firefighters are paid under a modified version of the same General Schedule pay system used for full-time, 40-hour-per-week Federal workers.

The result of the pay modification is that Federal firefighters make less per hour than any other Federal employee at their same grade level. For example: a firefighter who is a GS–5, Step 5 makes $7.21 per hour while other employees at the same grade and step earn $10.34 per hour. Some have tried to justify this by noting that part of a firefighter's day is downtime. However, I must note that all firefighters have substantial duties beyond those at the site of a fire. Adding to this discrepancy is the fact that the average municipal firefighter makes $12.87 per hour.

Mr. President, this has caused the Federal fire service to become a training ground for young men and women who then leave for higher pay elsewhere in the public sector. Continually training new employees is, as my colleagues know, very expensive for any employer.

The Office of Personnel Management is well aware of these problems. In fact, section 102 of the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990 [FEPCA], title V of Public Law 101–509, authorizes the establishment of special pay systems for certain Federal occupations. The origin of this provision was a recognition that the current pay classification system did not account for the unique and distinctive employment conditions of Federal protective occupations including the Federal fire service.

In May 1991, I wrote to OPM urging the establishment of a separate pay scale for firefighters under the authority provided for in FEPCA. Subsequently, OPM established an Advisory Committee on Law Enforcement and Protective Occupations consisting of agency personnel and representatives from Federal fire and law enforcement organizations. Beginning in August of 1991, representatives from the Federal fire community began working with OPM and other administration officials to identify and address the problems of paying Federal firefighters under the General Schedule. The committee completed its work in June of 1992 and in December of that year issued a staff report setting forth recommendations to correct the most serious problems with the current pay system.

Mr. President, I regret that since the release of the OPM recommendations, there has been no effort to implement any of the proposals of the advisory task force. In fact, OPM has communicated quite clearly that it has no plans to pursue any solution to the serious pay deficiencies that have been so widely identified and acknowledged.