service work. They also earn living allowances of about $7,400 a year and health care and child day care benefits.

About 90,000 people have served in the program since it started in 1993. More than $1.7 billion has been spent on or committed to the program so far, including $400 million set aside for education awards.

This year has about 500 Americorps workers. About 450 are expected next year.

According to the Corporation for National Service, Americorps workers last year tutored more than 500,000 youth, mentored 95,000 more, created 3,100 safety patrols, built or repaired 5,600 homes, placed 32,000 homeless people in permanent housing and recruited more than 300,000 volunteers.

Many Republicans, including House Speaker Newt Gingrich (Ga.), oppose the national service program. Gingrich told Newsweek magazine in 1995 that he was "totally, unqualifiedly opposed to national service. It is coerced volunteerism. It's a gimmick."

Critics also question whether the program is worth the expense, but officials at the corporation say they try to fund programs that get the most bang for the buck. The program uses strict standards to ensure funded programs produce results that can be measured—either the number of children tutored or the number of homes rehabilitated.

And they argue that the program represents a way for Washington to help communities—and an argument for labor-made for Republicans who advocate decentralized government.

"Right now there is a consensus in Washington that Washington cannot solve every problem and that we have to look at ways to strengthen local communities so they can take on more responsibility and do more for their community," said Tara Murphy, the director of public affairs for the corporation.

"That's exactly what this program does."

Two-thirds of the funds go straight to state commissions, made up of members appointed by the governors, she said. Those commissions decide which agencies get the money, and the agencies recruit and deploy the workers, she said.

Agencies that were awarded grants this week to hire Americorps workers don't question whether the program is worth the expense.

"It's definitely worth it," said Pat Clay, the director of the program at the Aunt Martha's Bonus Center of Park Forest, Ill., where 10 Americorps workers teach low-income parents how to instruct their preschool children.

"To see the smile on a child's face, to hear a parent say, 'My child tested very well in a preschool screening test'—that makes it worthwhile. You are investing in a child's future, in the future of the child and the future of the community," said Polk, one of six Americorps workers at Family Rescue, a community service agency in South Shore for victims of domestic violence, answers the agency's crisis line and helps arrange services for callers.

A victim of domestic violence herself, Polk said she had been hired for a permanent position to continue providing to women and children the services she never received.

"It's a healing process for me to help as many women as possible," she said. "I'm not doing this for the money. I'm doing it to help the community."

Becky Newell, 21, of Hanover Park, Ill., an Americorps worker for City Year who helped run an after-school program on gardening and environment, said she learned how much she meant to her students at the end of the year.

"When it's over and you say your good-byes, and the kids tell you what they think of you, that's when you know you've made a difference," she said.

In addition to authorizing the gold medals, the legislation would allow the Mint to continue selling coins commemorating Jackie Robinson through the end of this calendar year. CBO estimates that extending the time by which the Mint can sell these coins would increase collections to the Mint by about $1 million over fiscal years 1998 and 1999. (The Mint's authority to sell the coins expired on July 1.) According to the Mint, it has closed 80,000 coins in its inventory. If the Mint were to sell all of its inventory, it would generate between $3 million and $5 million in additional collections, net of surcharges that must be paid to the Jack Roosevelt Robinson Foundation, a charity.

That range depends on whether the Mint would sell some or all of the coins in bulk at a discounted price. Based on the sales of previous commemorative coin programs and because the coins were available already for purchase by the public, CBO expects that the Mint would sell far less than the amount of its inventory. In addition, because the Mint can retain and spend the additional collections on other commercial activities, CBO estimates that the provision would have no net budgetary impact over time.

S. 1283 would affect direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures would apply. S. 1283 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact is John R. Righter. This estimate was approved by Paul N. van de Wege, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBE EQUITABLE COMPENSATION ACT OF 1998

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support as a co-sponsor of S. 1005, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act of 1998. This is an important issue is the highest priority for the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe and will have a positive and lasting impact on the Cheyenne River reservation community and the entire State of South Dakota. I have worked closely with the Indian Affairs Committee to insure that this legislation protects the future interests of tribal members, and I am pleased that the bill reported by the Committee reflects these concerns. I am committed to ensuring that the bill receives strong Senate support, and look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that the bill moves forward for approval by the full Senate.