

In my view, States with parental involvement laws were wise to have enacted them, for the sake of parental rights, and especially for the sake of our daughters' health. The legislation before us fulfills the Federal Government's duty to protect these State laws from widespread circumvention through interstate travel. Far from undermining our Federal system, it upholds it in a manner fully consistent with the constitutional rights of everyone involved.

A number of politicians, including President Clinton, have promised the American people that they would work to make abortions "safe, legal and rare."

The Child Custody Protection Act addresses an important question of legality. It will protect State laws from those who would break them. It would uphold the rule of law and the important role States and State laws play in our Federal system.

But an abortion conducted in violation of parental notification laws is not legal, even if performed in another State.

Earlier I quoted Bruce Lucero, a doctor who once owned an abortion clinic, in which he performed some 45,000 abortions over the course of 15 years.

Dr. Lucero remains, in his words "staunchly pro-choice." Dr. Lucero also supports this legislation.

I hope my colleagues on the other side of the abortion issue will heed the warning he gave recently when he said:

Too often, pro-choice advocates oppose laws that make common sense simply because the opposition supports or promotes them. The only way we can and should keep abortions legal is to keep them safe. To fight laws that would achieve this end does no one any good—not the pregnant teen-agers, the parents or the pro-choice movement.

Mr. President, this laws does make common sense. It will protect the health of pregnant teen-agers, and it should have the full support of the Members of this body, whatever their views on the underlying issue of abortion. It was passed in the other Chamber by an overwhelming margin. It passed the Senate Judiciary Committee and, in my view, it deserves to pass by a similar margin in the full Senate.

I urge my colleagues to vote tomorrow in support of cloture on the motion to proceed to debate this issue.

In closing, let me just say this, Mr. President. As I looked through the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD at the summation and discussion between the majority leader and Democratic leader yesterday, I was a little bit confused. I at least read the Democratic leader's statement to suggest he is of the opinion that the vote tomorrow might in some way shut off consideration of amendments and debate on this issue, but that is not the case, and I want to make sure our colleagues are aware that tomorrow's vote is simply on the motion to proceed, to permit us to begin discussing this legislation.

It is not a motion for cloture on the substantive underlying bill and, indeed, virtually all of the amendments to this

legislation that were brought in committee will still survive a motion for cloture on the underlying bill because they were germane amendments at that time and would, according to the Parliamentarian, remain germane, even if we were to have cloture invoked on the substantive legislation.

For that reason, I hope our colleagues will think this issue—the question of whether or not we will allow strangers to circumvent State parental notification and consent laws and take children across State lines for the purpose of secretive abortions—that we should at least allow this issue to be debated here in the Senate.

For that reason, I hope we will be able to invoke cloture on the legislation. And once we do that, we can have a good and thorough debate and discussion, and then pass this legislation so that families like the Farley family can be protected in the future and so that the children of America can be protected in the future and so that the families who live in States that have taken the action of passing parental involvement laws can be confident that those laws do mean something and that we in Washington are willing to support those laws and make sure that those laws are in fact enforceable.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCAIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

#### STATUS OF OPERATIONAL READINESS OF U.S. MILITARY FORCES

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, only 8 years ago we went to war in the Persian Gulf as the most combat-ready force in the world. The value of that preparedness was clear. We won a massive victory in a few weeks over one of the largest armies in the world and we did so with remarkably few American and allied casualties. We were able to end aggression with minimum losses of civilian life and were even able to greatly reduce the casualties of our enemy. Today, our enormous preparedness, impressive military force, is beginning to evaporate.

In spite of the efforts of our services, armed services, we are having significant problems again that remind me of the very difficult period during the 1970s when the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army came before the Congress and said we had a "hollow army." We are losing the combat readiness and edge that is an essential aspect of deterrence, defense, and the ability to repel aggression.

It is true that we have heard many reassuring words to the contrary from the administration. The fact is, however, that we are "going hollow." We are losing our ability to get there "fastest with the mostest," and the indicators are all too clear the moment we look beyond superficial indicators and the normal rhetoric of budget testimony.

Mr. President, I have heard firsthand accounts from commanders in the field and in the fleet on the deteriorating

status of the operational readiness of the U.S. military forces, including the availability of resources and training opportunities necessary to meet our national security requirements. Although the upcoming year's budget makes some strides to reverse 5 straight years of underfunding for both short-term and long-term modernization, I have serious concerns about the future state of preparedness of our units and our men and women in the military.

The tangible evidence of this trend is contained in the words of nearly all the military witnesses who have testified this past year before the Senate Committee on Armed Services as well as before our House counterparts. Their statements do not reveal a single reason why we are going hollow or a single set of answers as to how these problems can be solved.

Each service has a unique mix of readiness problems and has made different tradeoffs. At its core, however, is an alarming lack of concern on the part of the administration that repeatedly acts without regard for the most basic requirements for maintaining Armed Forces essential for our national security and promoting our national interests. The repeated and deliberate failure to match requirements, as set forth by the National Command Authority, with resources adequate to the task, compounded by the White House's unwillingness to budget for ongoing contingency peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, has over time clearly degraded military preparedness.

Not to be ignored is the role of Congress in exacerbating this situation through its exceedingly damaging practice of wasting scarce financial resources on programs for strictly parochial reasons. That practice was harmful when we were adding to the administration's budget request in the context of the 1997 balanced budget agreement. And that harm is magnified manifold.

Mr. President, I have spoken many times of the wasteful spending practices embodied in the defense appropriations bill, and I will not go through the details again now. But the fact is that a lack of a Base Closing Commission commitment, the lack of a commitment to a balanced force, the continued unnecessary and unneeded funding for especially our Guard resources, and our inability to somehow make the transition to the post-cold-war requirements of a military that is ready to move anyplace in the world on short notice, is absolutely deplorable. And as I indict the administration, Mr. President, the Congress also bears enormous responsibility for our failure as well.

In spite of the highest readiness funding in our history, we are having preparedness and readiness difficulties. Some recent examples noted by experts

are—and I quote a memorandum dated August 20, 1998, from General Bramlett, Commander-in-Chief of Forces Command, to Army Chief of Staff General Reimer. General Bramlett wrote:

... we can no longer train and sustain the force, stop infrastructure degradation, and provide our soldiers the quality of life programs critical to long term readiness of the force... we cannot operate within current funding levels and have the viable fighting force we want to project into the next century. Operation and maintenance funding levels are no longer sufficient to "make it happen" and avoid serious long-term negative impacts to the force. Commanders of Fort Lewis, Stewart, and Bragg [all installations home to major contingency "first-to-deploy" units] report units will drop below authorized training levels in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 1999. This threatens our ability to mobilize, deploy, fight, and win. Current funding levels place FORSCOM's ability to accomplish its mission at an unacceptable risk.

Mr. President, let me repeat: "Current funding levels place FORSCOM's ability to accomplish its mission at an unacceptable risk." Mr. President, I want to remind you, these are not my words but the words of General Bramlett who is the Commander-in-Chief of Forces Command and contained in a memorandum to the Chief of Staff of the Army.

Current funding levels place FORSCOM's ability to accomplish its mission at an unacceptable risk.

We must have additional funding for FY 99 and beyond.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the entire memorandum from General Bramlett to General Reimer be printed in the RECORD.

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

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, HEAD-  
QUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY  
FORCES COMMAND,

Fort McPherson, GA, August 20, 1998.

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY, 200 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC

SUBJECT: FY 99 FUNDING ASSESSMENT

1. The FORSCOM commanders have recently completed their review of resource requirements against their FY 99 funding distribution. My guidance was to maintain training (go-to-war) readiness at the expense of infrastructure and Quality of Life (QOL) if they could not balance the requirements of all three. They have done their best to implement this guidance, but we can no longer train and sustain the force, stop infrastructure degradation, and provide our soldiers the QOL programs critical to long term readiness of the force. Commanders remain fully committed to supporting force readiness, but we cannot operate within current funding levels and have the viable fighting force we want to project into the next century.

2. We can provide trained and ready units in FY 99, but we anticipate some drop in reported readiness levels as the year progresses. Our BASOPS accounts have only marginal funding levels, and Real Property Maintenance (RPM) accounts are nearly depleted at many of our installations. The OMA funding levels are no longer sufficient to "make it happen" and avoid serious long-term negative impacts to the force. These insufficient funding levels are further degraded

by refined TRM cost factors, by the inability to achieve the programmed efficiencies, and by the increased funding for contracting support. Our flexibility is further hampered by stovepipe funding for specific programs that have become a larger percentage of our total budget.

3. Despite considerable efforts to conserve scarce training resources at the expense of QOL and infrastructure, unit readiness will be degraded. Commanders at Forts Lewis, Stewart, and Bragg report units will drop below ALO in the fourth quarter of FY 99. This threatens our ability to mobilize, deploy, fight, and win.

4. In FY 98, we mortgaged infrastructure and QOL to maintain training readiness. BASOPS and RPM were underfunded again, but with little migration (\$18M) as we needed every dollar for training. Infrastructure maintenance and repair are now funded below survival levels. FY 99 marks the second consecutive year in which FORSCOM could not fund installation infrastructure repair beyond "break and fix." The most critical unfunded repairs totaling \$215M are: sewer and utility systems—\$49M; barracks roofing/heading/and air conditioning repair—\$59M; roofs on maintenance and ammo facilities—\$10M; bridges and roads—\$29M; training and operations facilities repairs—\$7M; and other general facility repair projects—\$60M. Of immediate concern is our inability to resource food service contracts which drives us to the associated alternative of possibly returning our soldiers to perform kitchen and dining facility attendant duties. Base Information management operations, the DOIMS, were hit especially hard. This account is down more than 30 percent from FY 98, severely affecting base automation, printing, and automation equipment accounts. Commanders state that shortfalls will "render infrastructure, QOL, and BASOPS(-) non-mission capable."

5. We fully understand that many of our unfunded requirements can only be realized with an increase in the overall funding level for the Department, and we continue to advocate that goal. As part of our assessment, we have identified those UFRs requiring funding by way of Funding Letter inserts as well as other critical UFRs to be worked through the year of execution. Those items requiring additional funds within our funding letter include: Food Services and Dining Facility Operations—\$10.1M; AC/RC Support—\$15.6M; AC/ARNG Integrated Divisions—\$4.1M; Digital Training—\$18.5M; Force Modernization—\$18.6M; and Commercial Activities Studies—\$3.2M.

6. Our Executive Agent role in the DCSC4 areas demands intense management as we act on the Army's behalf. To resource the requirements of these missions in FY 99 will require: an additional \$26.3M in funding letter inserts for Long Haul Commo; \$14.1M for sustainment of the new Command and Control Protect mission; and \$1.7M for support of the Defense Red Switch Network. In addition, we request that Europe's portion be provided to them as was done in the POM.

7. AC/RC Support (Training Support XXI) continues to be significantly underfunded as we transition into the new Support to Operational Training Functional Area Assessment (SOT-AA) Integrated alternative structure. This structure will be fully staffed in FY 99 after a ramp-up year in FY 98. The funding requirement is inherently heavy in TDY, as observer/controllers/evaluators and other training assistance personnel must travel to the associated RC units and training sites. We are concerned about our ability to fully perform this growing mission. In addition, the new AC/ARNG Integrated Divisions that will begin to stand up provisionally on 1 October 1998 are unfunded in FY99.

These shortages are particularly acute in the context of our stated commitment to the Total Army.

8. As we move toward fielding a digitized force, we need resources for robust digital training events and associated training infrastructure upgrades. Funding tails become major cost drivers as the Army moves from Advanced Warfighting Experiments (AWE) and applique to equipping and training the digitized force. Insufficient funding continues to delay modernization of many training support facilities. The TRM process needs to better resource training support infrastructure such as ranges, simulation facilities, transportation networks to/from/in and around ranges, targetry, and maneuver boxes.

9. My assessment is not good news. Funding has fallen below the survival level in FY 99. The commanders are concerned that they can not meet the daily challenges of the three imperatives of readiness: training, QOL, and infrastructure. Our commitment to doing our part in reengineering, creative training strategies, and best business practices has never been stronger. Current funding levels place FORSCOM's ability to accomplish its mission at an unacceptable risk. We must have additional funding for FY 99 and beyond.

DAVID A. BRAMLETT,  
General, USA,  
Commanding.

Mr. MCCAIN. He ends up by saying:

My assessment is not good news. Funding has fallen below the survival level in FY 99. The commanders are concerned that they cannot meet the daily challenges of the three imperatives of readiness: Training, QOL [meaning quality of life], and infrastructure. Our commitment to doing our part in reengineering, creative training strategies, and best business practices has never been stronger. Current funding levels place FORSCOM's ability to accomplish its mission at an unacceptable risk.

It is a very, very strong statement, Mr. President. I have been associated with the military all my life, and I have not seen quite that strong a statement or a stronger statement than that from one of our commanders in the field.

The Air Force's 1st Fighter Wing, with primary responsibility for the Middle East, has experienced a prolonged period of declining preparedness, as squadrons are forced to deploy at physically and mentally exhausting rates while spare parts shortages result in the cannibalization of fighters from one squadron to ensure another can deploy on schedule.

Naval aviators have stated to Armed Services Committee members and staff that the frequency of deployments has placed excessive stress on their personal lives, with the result that many are leaving the service for higher paying, less stressful jobs with the commercial airlines. That operational tempo is a direct result of the convergence of shrinking force structure and increased deployments to overseas contingencies.

The commander of the 3rd Fleet, Vice Adm. Herbert Browne, testified before the Readiness Subcommittee that the shortage of skilled personnel has resulted in crossdecking, which places enormous additional stress on those

personnel remaining in the service. "Crossdecking," Mr. President, means when a ship comes back from a deployment, the personnel of that ship, rather than being allowed to come home, then move to another ship that is headed out on another deployment—an absolutely unacceptable practice.

During the same hearing, the commander of an Air Force fighter wing operations group testified that his unit's full mission capable rates have consistently dropped from 90 percent in 1993, to 80 percent in the 1995 time frame, down to 70 percent for the present.

Radar and jet engine mechanics told ABC News reporters of their growing frustration with shortages of spare parts to repair aircraft and of the exodus from the service of skilled mid-level maintenance people, with the result that aircraft sit idle and less skilled personnel are assigned vital maintenance and repair work. On the same broadcast, the commander of Air Combat Command stated that his command has "suffered about a 10 percent to 12 percent decline in the average readiness of our fleet from day-to-day."

In a June 1998 letter from Admiral M.G. Mullen, Director of Surface Warfare Division on the Chief of Naval Operations staff wrote to every surface warfare commanding officer soliciting ideas to turn around retention amongst surface warfare junior officers. In his letter he wrote, "I can also tell you we are only retaining about 1 in 4 and we must keep 1 in 3 to develop the leaders our Navy needs."

In a San Diego Union-Tribune article on September 2, 1998 during an interview with Admiral Clemins, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet, it was reported that the Navy is short 18,000 sailors, forcing the Navy to send many warships including carriers to the Persian Gulf at a reduced level of readiness, specifically a C-2 rating, only the second highest level of readiness.

According to a 1998 article in the Army Times, the mission of the Army has increased by 300 percent since 1989, yet its active duty force has declined by 36 percent and its budget by 40 percent. These facts have resulted in a severe decrease in the level of operational readiness for the service and led former Assistant Vice-Army Chief of Staff of the Army Lieutenant General Jay Garner to describe divisions as "hollow."

Colonel Stephen E. Bozarth, Commander of the 388th Operations Group, testified before the Readiness Subcommittee that although the current experience level of the pilots of the Wing is 77 percent, it is expected to degrade over the next 18 months to approximately 50 percent. Such a loss in experience results in not only untrained personnel fulfilling necessary pilot positions but also an inadequate number of people to train these individuals. Moreover these losses necessitate that pilots who choose to remain

in the service work longer and harder hours, thus creating a serious strain on morale.

Vice Admiral Browne also testified this year that inadequate fuel supplies are depriving pilots of strike fighter jets the flight hour training necessary for familiarization of the aircraft. Lack of such training will result in the substandard performance of these men and women in the multi-threat environment in which they currently operate.

The commander of the Air Warfare Center (AWFC), Major General Marvin Esmond, testified before the Readiness Subcommittee that those under his command have experienced a six month slip in skill improvement due to delays in specialized training. Such delays are a direct consequence of a lack of manpower. This loss in personnel has also required that the servicemen and women work 60-65 hours per week as well as 12 hour duty shifts.

Major General Ronald Richard, Commanding General of the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, voiced concerns over equipment readiness to the Readiness Subcommittee. According to the general, a majority of his equipment is "getting exceedingly old," a fact which has led to increased maintenance as well as excessive expenditure.

In order to understand the issues involved, it is necessary to understand just how difficult it is to achieve the level of military preparedness we enjoyed during Desert Storm. Military preparedness is the product of readiness and sustainability, the former referring to the ability of forces to go to war on short notice, the latter the ability to support them in the field. Preparedness is not just a matter of funding operations and maintenance at the proper level. It is not only a matter of funding adequate numbers of high quality personnel. It is not simply a matter of funding superior weapons and munitions, strategic mobility and prepositioning, high operating tempos, realistic levels of training at every level of combat, or logistics and support capabilities.

Military preparedness is all these things and more. A force begins to go hollow the moment it loses its overall mix of combat capabilities in any one critical area. Our technological edge in Desert Storm would have been meaningless if we did not have properly trained men and women. Having the best weapons system platforms in the world would not have given us our victory if we had not had the right command and control facilities, maintenance capabilities, and munitions.

The preparedness problem within the military is compounded by both the "can do" attitude of the military and the history of military readiness reporting. On the one hand, our men and women in uniform have a history of making do, of adjusting to civilian decisions, and working out potential solutions even at the cost of assuming higher risks. An example of this is the

continued practice of the Marine Corps to retread the tires of the humvees (HMMVV's) and five-ton trucks of the First and Second Marine Expeditionary Forces.

On the other, we have been very slow to modernize and integrate our various measures of effectiveness, to independently audit command reporting, and to adopt modern management information systems. Time and again, we have learned that our readiness measures are unrealistic or fail to anticipate real-world demands on readiness funds and budget cuts. Time and again, we have seen peacetime claims of "can do" turn into wartime realities of "can't fight."

Mr. President, in mid-July I sent letters to each of the Service Chiefs expressing my concern about the military's overall state of readiness. In order that I might gain a better understanding of current readiness and readiness trends in the military, I asked each Service Chief to provide detailed answers to questions by September 30, 1998, from all levels within the military and not just the typical Pentagon talk that we have become used to during the multitude of hearings that surround the defense budget cycle. In addition, I requested that the responses to the questions also include an assessment of National Guard and Reserve readiness. Mr. President, I intend to share these answers with my colleagues and make them widely available to the public. It is critical that not only Members of Congress, but all Americans should be fully informed on the state of our military so that they can participate in any discussions in the near future to add money to the defense budget and reprioritize critical resources within the military.

Very often, those who question the Administration's commitment to maintaining proper levels of military preparedness are accused of exaggerating the scale of the problem through the random marshaling of anecdotal information. These criticisms, to say the least, are without merit. If a pattern of evidence cannot be seen as leading to a logical conclusion, then the basis for rational, objective intellectual discourse is thoroughly discredited. This "anecdotal evidence" increases every year, is discovered through visits to the field to meet with military personnel of all ranks, through congressional hearings, media reports and scholarly studies, and is beyond dispute.

My President, this will be as true in the future as it was during Desert Storm, and it has been true throughout the history of warfare. As Sun Tzu pointed out over 2,000 years ago, "It is a doctrine of war not to assume the enemy will not come, but rather to rely on one's readiness to meet him. It is a doctrine of war not to presume that he will not attack, but rather to make one's self invincible."

I make those statements concerning military readiness in the context of what is happening in the world today.

When you glance around the globe you find that there is a potential trouble spot in literally every continent of the world with the exception of the two poles and perhaps Australia. We find this situation in Kosovo with ethnic cleansing where our Secretary of State, several months ago said, and I believe the quote is accurate, "We will not allow the Serbs to do in Kosovo what we prevented them from doing in Bosnia." The last time I checked, Mr. President, they were doing quite a bit of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, and the situation continues to worsen.

In Iraq, we have gone from a position where our Secretary of State said we would respond with military force if Saddam Hussein refused to allow our U.N. inspectors access to any installation that they desired—would be met with military force. Now, according to Scott Ritter and other reports, the administration has been encouraging UNSCOM not to inspect.

The situation in Asia is serious. Riots are taking place in Indonesia as we speak. The nation that the World Bank a year and a half ago did a study on as a model nation for economic development, now had the privilege of seeing its President go on nationwide television in Indonesia and recommended that the Indonesian people not eat 2 days a week because of food shortages.

We have seen the administration surprised by the nuclear tests conducted by both India and Pakistan.

We have now apparently circumstantial evidence that technology was transferred to China, which either marginally or substantially, depending on which expert you talk to, increased the precision targeting capability of Russian ICBMs until recently, 12 of which were targeted on the United States of America—now are not—but in a matter of seconds could be retargeted.

Mr. President, I could go on. But the fact is that the world is a very tough neighborhood and requires a tough cop. The cop is now not on the beat and bad things are happening all over the world, which makes it even more likely that we may have to call upon the United States of America to again expend its blood and treasure somewhere in the world. The very least we can do is make sure that those men and women who we have to send somewhere are the best equipped and trained as we possibly can make them. What I greatly fear is that we may have to send them less than well prepared, less than ready, and less than well equipped, which then leads to the inevitable consequence of casualties that are unnecessary and tragic.

Mr. President, I intend to talk more on this issue. I think it is an important one. I also remind my colleagues that we—the traditional protectors of the military—have an obligation to address this issue as well as the administration. Mr. President, I thank the Chair for his patience and for presiding at this late hour.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SESSIONS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent to proceed as in morning business for 10 minutes.

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

#### MILITARY READINESS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I appreciate the remarks of Senator MCCAIN from Arizona. He is a true American patriot, an academy graduate, a former fighter pilot, a prisoner of war, a person who has been a leader in this body in matters of defense. A few days ago, a Senator from the other side, Senator LIEBERMAN, made a seminal address on the need for morality, integrity and honesty in public leadership, and by the President in particular.

Senator MCCAIN's remarks, in my opinion, are equally as important. He has said some things, as a conscience of this body, on defense matters that we ought to listen to, and I am hearing it repeatedly from people I know in the military services who are concerned about the erosion of our national defense. I join with him in those concerns. I appreciate him sharing it with us, and I hope he will continue to speak out in this body as eloquently as he does on these important issues.

#### CHILD CUSTODY PROTECTION ACT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Child Custody Protection Act. Senator Spencer ABRAHAM of Michigan has previously spoken on this matter, just a few minutes ago. I have been honored to be a cosponsor of that legislation with him from the beginning and to participate in a number of different activities that he has led to try to call this legislation to the attention of the people of America, and to do what we can to see that it is brought up for a vote in this body, and to pass this legislation.

It appears to me that this legislation would be difficult for most anybody to oppose. The issue of abortion has divided our country for many years now. But the issue we are considering today is not whether abortion should be legal or not. The Supreme Court, in my opinion, erroneously took that issue away from the people, ripped it out as a matter for the democratic process, and decided and declared that the Constitution prohibits the limiting of abortions, except in certain circumstances.

But even the Supreme Court has made it clear that it is proper for a State to declare that an abortion should not be performed on a minor child unless the parents are consulted. Certainly, they have to be consulted about minor surgery—and they are consulted by their school principals and teachers if they are even given Tylenol. To perform an abortion without

parental consent is a very dramatic interference in family and parental relationships that many States have decided to protect. Even our Supreme Court, which has ruled erroneously, in my opinion, in a number of different ways on this issue, has approved that.

We have now discovered that there is a problem. We have discovered that people are taking children across State lines, from one State where parents have to be notified—third parties are intervening in the family relationship and are taking children across to another State that doesn't have that law, for the purpose of having an abortion performed on them.

In my view, the right of parents to be involved in these major decisions affecting their minor children is a fundamental thing and ought not to be lightly transgressed. State parental consent and notification statutes are an important protection for fundamental parental rights. Let me say that the issue before us today is not whether States should have such laws—some do, some don't—the issue before us today is whether we will allow these important and clearly constitutional State laws to be circumvented.

The purpose of this bill is simply to preclude some third party from trampling on the rights of parents by advising a minor child to have an abortion, and then assisting them by taking them across a State line to a State where they can have one.

This legislation before us today would forbid a third party from transporting a minor child across the State line for the purpose of an abortion, without the parent's knowledge or consent, in order to evade compliance with the law of the State where the parent and child reside. This is hardly a radical or extreme proposal, and the bill is necessary. It is constitutional and it is carefully and narrowly drawn.

Senator ABRAHAM has done a superb job in drafting this legislation. He has listened to those who have expressed concerns about it, and he has constantly revised and improved it. It is an exceptionally fine piece of legislation, in my opinion.

Mr. President, let me say that I believe this bill is necessary. In the Judiciary Committee hearing we had, we heard horrible stories. One involved Joyce Farley's 13-year-old daughter and one involved Eileen Roberts' 14-year-old daughter. In both cases, these young girls were secretly transported across the State line by adults seeking to hide the fact of the pregnancy from the children's parents. In both of these cases, these young girls were taken from a State that had a parental consent statute to one that did not. In both of these cases, the young girls suffered serious complications from these legal, but botched, abortions.

Parenthetically, Mr. President, let me state that recently in the New York Times there was an op-ed piece by a former abortion doctor who, according to the first paragraph in the article,