

to improve the bill and address concerns that have been raised, and in my view any remaining concerns can be worked out.

So next year, class action reform will be one of my highest priorities. I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that we eliminate those abuses that too often give class actions a bad name.

TRIBUTE TO DR. STEVEN DEKOSKY

• Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, next month our nation acknowledges the more than 4 million Americans who suffer from Alzheimer's disease and the 19 million who are their caregivers. National Alzheimer's month is a time to reflect on those who are afflicted as well as those who are dedicating their lives to eradicating this disease.

I bring to your attention one of those who is committed to creating a world without Alzheimer's. His name is Dr. Steven DeKosky and since 1990, he has been on the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine where among other things, he directs the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center funded by the National Institute on Aging. Dr. DeKosky's accomplishments are enormous as reflected in his curriculum vitae, which is some 36 pages long. If I tried to list all of his achievements it would fill dozens of pages of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. In the interests of the taxpayers, I'll mention only a few of Dr. DeKosky's contributions.

As a renowned Alzheimer researcher, clinician and teacher, Dr. DeKosky is dedicated to finding answers to the Alzheimer's puzzle. To this end, he is active in basic and clinical research. His basic research is on the structural and neurochemical changes in human brains with dementia. His clinical research focuses on four key areas. One is to find ways of diagnosing the disease more effectively and differentiating it from other related diseases. A second area involves neuroimaging, which helps to confirm other diagnostic techniques, but also opens "windows" to the brain to enable scientists to understand the disease better. A third area of study, and one that is offering very exciting possibilities for treatment, is the assessment of genetic risk factors in Alzheimer's. Finally, he is involved in clinical trials to assess new medications for Alzheimer's disease.

Dr. DeKosky is active in the American Academy of Neurology and the American Neurological Association. The latter organization honored him with its "Presidential Award" in 1988. He is listed in "The Best Doctors in America." He serves on the editorial boards of the "Archives of Neurology" and the "Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders: An International Journal." He also received a Teacher Investigator Development Award from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

Despite his involvement in dozens of research projects and other academic

pursuits, Dr. DeKosky contributes vast amounts of time as a volunteer to the Alzheimer cause. He currently chairs the national Alzheimer's Association's Medical and Scientific Advisory Council and is a member of the board of the Alzheimer's Association. He chairs the Professional Advisory Board of the Greater Pittsburgh Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and was a founding member of the Lexington-Blue Grass Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.

Dr. DeKosky has a special gift as a communicator of science. Whether in the classroom or speaking to groups of family members in the community, Dr. DeKosky has a knack for making the complex seem simple. He expresses the enthusiasm and hope created by scientific research in Alzheimer's, which is offering promise to Americans of all ages that their future may not be blighted by this dread disease. And, he has a sense of humor and a healthy dose of humility, which allows him to "connect" to those to whom he speaks.

Mr. President, I believe it is important to acknowledge the unsung heroes who are working tirelessly in laboratories and in the clinic to make our world less disease-prone. Dr. Steven DeKosky is one of those exemplary citizens who through his daily efforts is bringing about a better tomorrow. •

THE YEAR 2000 PROBLEM

• Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise today to express my great concern about the Year 2000 computer problem, and to urge that funding be approved on an emergency basis to address this problem.

Mr. President, in less than 500 days, an unknown number of computers around the world will fail because they can't tell the difference between the year 1900 and the year 2000. Although this may seem like a minor problem that could be easily fixed, it is not. It's time consuming, difficult, and expensive to address. And the implications of failure are enormous.

We have known about the Year 2000 problem for some time, Mr. President, but many have failed to appreciate its severity. Throughout the private and public sectors, top officials assumed that someone else would find a solution. Or they simply did not appreciate the importance of making this problem a priority.

Fortunately, Mr. President, many in the private sector are now taking this threat seriously. One Federal Reserve official speculated that private sector spending on the problem could exceed \$50 billion. While many small businesses are just beginning to face the problem, most major large businesses are acting aggressively. Banks, utilities, hospitals, factories, insurance companies, and railroads are scrambling to ensure that they will be ready. Many understand that this truly is an emergency, and they're treating it that way.

Still, I am afraid that most Americans still do not appreciate the severity of the Y2K problem. And I would urge all those listening to educate themselves about it. Admittedly, it is very difficult for most of us to evaluate the risks. But many credible experts have discussed scenarios that are truly alarming.

Consider, for example, the impact of the Y2K problem on public utilities. Senators BENNETT and DODD, the co-chairs of the Senate Special Committee on the Year 2000 Technology Problem, have held a hearing on this, and I commend both of them for their leadership. Their Committee surveyed major utilities and found that many are far from ready for the year 2000. The Committee's work raises very serious questions about the risks of major power outages throughout our country, and the impact of such outages on our financial and telecommunications systems. Indeed, the essential infrastructure of our nation could be at risk.

Largely because of such threats, some economists have argued that the Year 2000 problem is likely to lead to a severe recession. Some see a parallel to the downturn of the 1970's when oil supplies were disrupted. In fact, quick and reliable computing may be even more important to our economy than oil was two decades ago. Without reliable computer information, as without oil, production and distribution systems could break down. And that could dramatically increase unemployment, interest rates and inflation, all at the same time.

Now, Mr. President, I'm not saying that this is bound to happen. Experts disagree about the likelihood of major economic and social dislocations. However, even if the odds of a significant breakdown are modest, the potential enormity of the problem demands that we take it seriously.

I do know from my own experience that software problems can be terribly serious and difficult to address. Before I came to public life, I was an executive in a computer services firm, a firm that has been quite successful. I can tell you that nothing is more vexing than a seemingly insignificant software glitch that grinds an entire program to a halt. Fixing such a glitch can require laborious, line-by-line examination of impenetrable computer code. Meanwhile, everything is often brought to a standstill.

While analysts may disagree about the scope of the Y2K problem, Mr. President, it does seem clear that some things will go wrong on January 1, 2000. We just can't say exactly which, or how many. Compounding matters, even if one system has had its Y2K problems fixed, it still can be corrupted by interacting with other systems that are flawed. We have a systemic problem—and it will only be solved if all of us work together.

What is the government's role in all this? Well, our first responsibility is to put our own house in order.

As the General Accounting Office has reported, Y2K could have a devastating impact on the provision of public services. These include air traffic control, Social Security and Medicare payments, supervision of the financial system, monitoring of nuclear facilities, and a wide variety of other services. And let's not forget the Nation's defense. We are all proud of our modern military with its smart weapons and computerized battlefields. But a technology-dependent military is subject to the same computer hazards as everyone else.

Unfortunately, Mr. President, many agencies are way behind schedule in fixing the Y2K problem. According to GAO, "unless agency progress improves dramatically, a substantial number of mission-critical systems will not be compliant in time."

So, Mr. President, this is truly an emergency, and it's critical that we act as soon as possible. Unlike many problems we face in the Congress, this one can't be delayed or postponed. We can't set up a commission. We can't put it off until the next Congress. On January 1, 2000, the problem will hit, whether we like it or not. And we have to do everything we can to prepare.

Mr. President, let me commend my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee, and throughout the Senate, for approving emergency funding to address the Y2K problem. I wish we had done so earlier. Unfortunately, there are many Members in the House of Representatives who strongly oppose treating this funding as an emergency. And they have created serious obstacles to allocating the funding. I urge them to reconsider their opposition, and am hopeful they will.

Beyond increasing funding, Mr. President, there are other steps that the Federal government must consider to address the Y2K problem. For example, we need to reform laws that discourage businesses from sharing relevant information with each other. We need to ensure that businesses accurately report on their compliance efforts to the SEC and investors. We need to support small businesses' efforts to fix their computers. I have actively supported these types of legislative initiatives. But I recognize that they are not sufficient. We also need to communicate better with our constituents about the problem, so that all Americans can prepare.

Mr. President, given differing views on the actual risks, the only wise thing is to prepare for the worst. When a hurricane approaches, we never know exactly where it will hit, or how destructive it will be. But that doesn't stop us from evacuating and boarding up our homes in expectation of the worst case scenario. Sometimes, those preparations prove unnecessary. And, if the hurricane does hit, there will also be cleanup costs later. But the better one prepares, the more efficient, and less expensive, the cleanup will be. And the same is true for Y2K.

So, Mr. President, I would strongly urge this Congress to focus serious attention on Y2K, and to strongly support all funding needed to solve the problem. This is an emergency, and the time to act is now. We shouldn't panic. But we must prepare. Even if nobody knows the exact dimensions of the problem, this is one threat that we ignore at our peril.●

CORRECTION TO THE LIST OF OBJECTIONABLE PROVISIONS IN THE FISCAL YEAR 1999 INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS BILL

● Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I wish to make a clarification to my list of objectionable provisions to the Senate passed version of the FY'99 Interior Appropriations bill.

I was pleased to learn that the Indian health facility that is designated to be constructed on the Hopi reservation in Arizona was requested for funding in this year's budget. I had previously objected to this item in my pork list, not based on the merits of the project, but what appeared to be an unrequested, directed earmark.

The Hopi Health Center in Polacca, Arizona is requested for funding at the level of \$14,400,000 for construction of Indian health facilities, which is consistent with the budget request. I will remove this item as an objectionable provision.

I assure Chairman Wayne Taylor and the Hopi Tribe that I continue to be supportive of establishing an Indian health center for the Hopi community.

TAIWAN'S NATIONAL DAY

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I rise today to offer my congratulations to President Lee Teng-hui and the people of the Republic of China on Taiwan on the occasion of their National Day which will occur October 10. It is a deep honor for me to join in the celebration of this momentous occasion.

The remarkable achievements of Taiwan continue to tell a powerful story of how democracy can grow in Asia, and that it is compatible with a commitment to capitalism. Taiwan's ability to survive the Asian financial crisis better than any other free economy in the region is just another example of the significance of Taiwan's leadership. Quite simply, Taiwan's economic and political miracles never cease to amaze me.

It is a true honor for me to have a long-standing, very personal friendship with Taiwan. My own state of West Virginia has benefitted from Taiwan's commitment to the U.S. in profound and long-lasting ways. I am more committed than ever to the people of Taiwan to keep building on a relationship that holds so much more promise in the years ahead. I know that we will continue to look to Taiwan to continue setting an example in their commitment to democracy, to vibrant economic ties with the U.S. and the rest of the world, and to peace.●

ELLEN BERLINER

● Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, with more than 4 million Americans suffering from Alzheimer's disease at a cost to our society of more than \$100 billion annually, it is time we take a moment to reflect on the work of those who are dedicating their energies to helping do something about this terrible disease.

One of those people is Ellen Berliner. Ms. Berliner, who lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, took care of her husband with Alzheimer's disease for 13 years. For those of us who have not been a caregiver for an Alzheimer patient, it is difficult to comprehend what the experience is like. It has been described as the "36 hour day" or the "endless funeral" because the demands are greater and more stressful than what most of us can deal with in a normal 24 hour day, and the losses and emotional strain are enormous. Ms. Berliner, like so many other Americans, stepped up to the challenge of caregiving and performed courageously out of love for her husband and her family.

But, Ms. Berliner didn't stop there. Drawing on her pain and struggles as a caregiver, she decided to do something to help others. In 1988, she helped create the Greater Pittsburgh chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and became its founding Board President. In the past ten years, she has contributed more than 16,000 hours of volunteer service to the chapter and to the families in the greater Pittsburgh area. She has developed support groups and services to help families. She has been active in advocacy to help improve the policies that affect the lives of families and people suffering from Alzheimer's. And, she has stuffed envelopes and made phone calls to help raise the necessary funds to support the work of this important charity.

Ms. Berliner has a long history of community service. In 1974 she co-founded the Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh. The center, which provides a safe haven for battered women, was one of the first in the nation. For her work with battered women and for other community services, Ms. Berliner was nominated for the Jefferson Award of the American Institute for Public Service in 1992. In 1996, Ms. Berliner received the "New Person Award" given by the Thomas Merton Center for People Over 70. The award is given in appreciation of life-long works for peace and social justice.

Mr. President, I bring Ms. Berliner to the attention of this body because I believe we should shine a light on the good works of our citizens, heroic work really, that is done without personal gain and with no desire for public recognition. Our nation has grown strong because of people like Ellen Berliner who use their own time and resources to make life a little better for the rest of us.

So, I say "thank you" to Ms. Ellen Berliner for helping the people of Pittsburgh deal with the devastation caused by Alzheimer's disease, and for being a