

considering that issue in their legislative bodies. Finally, S. 96 would provide state and local governments protection from punitive damages arising from a Y2K action. Only six states and the District of Columbia have already passed legislation protecting themselves and their localities from Y2K liability. To the extent that state and local governments could become defendants in Y2K litigation and have not protected themselves from liability, this bill would provide such protection and could result in a savings.

Estimated impact on the private sector: S. 96 would impose a new private-sector mandate by requiring prospective plaintiffs in legal actions related to Y2K computer problems to notify prospective defendants of their intent to file suit and wait up to ninety days after such notification before filing. The notice must identify the cause and size of the prospective plaintiff's loss, the remedy sought, and the legal basis for the suit.

For a single prospective plaintiff, the cost of complying with the mandate, the expense incurred in drafting and delivering the notice, is relatively small. The notice is, in effect, a summary of the suit to be filed, so that preparation for the suit is also preparation for the notice. CBO cannot, however, produce an estimate of the aggregate costs of the mandate, largely because we have no way to predict the number of Y2K lawsuits.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Susanne Mehlman; Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Lisa Cash Driskill; Impact on the Private Sector: John Harris.

Estimate approved by: Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

#### ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise to observe the Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day which takes place on April 24. Each year we remember and honor the victims, and pay respect to the survivors we are blessed to still have with us.

During the periods 1915–1918 and 1920–1923, approximately 1.5 million Armenians perished under the rule of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. The Armenian people fell victim to deportation, expropriation, torture, starvation and massacre. We signify April 24, 1915 as the day of remembrance because of the more than 200 Armenian community leaders who were systematically hunted down in Constantinople on this date.

The Armenian genocide was the result of a consciously orchestrated government plan. The United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, stated at the time that, "When the Turkish authorities gave the orders for these deportations, they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race; they understood this well, and, in their conversations with me, they made no particular attempt to conceal the fact . . . I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this."

In an effort to further our understanding of this tragic period, one of my constituents, Mae Derdarian, has written an important survivor's account of the Armenian genocide. Her book, *Vergeen*, recounts a thirteen-year old girl's deportation from her

home, the atrocities she survived, her escape from her tormentors, and her ultimate triumph over the horrors she witnessed and which were perpetrated on her. In a review of Ms. Derdarian's book, *The Detroit Jewish News* wrote "Every now and then a book comes along that haunts the reader long after the last page is turned. *Vergeen* is one of those stories . . . Mae Derdarian has created a page-turner, combing *Vergeen's* memoir and her own mother's recorded accounts of what both women endured as survivors of the first genocide of the 20th century." Such first-hand accounts from survivors are critical to our understanding of genocide, and help us all to recognize and honor the lives of the victims.

Mr. President, each year we remember the horrors suffered by the Armenian people during the periods 1915–1918 and 1920–1923 under the Ottoman Empire. However, it is not enough to simply remember those who have perished. We must dedicate ourselves to see that tragedies such as the Armenian Genocide are not revisited on our planet. This is the highest tribute we can pay to the victims of any genocide.

The Armenian people have earned our enduring admiration for withstanding the horrors of two world wars and several decades of Soviet dominance in order to establish modern Armenia. The United States must continue its efforts to support freedom, prosperity and stability in Armenia as we honor and remember the victims of the Armenian Genocide.

#### ARMENIAN GENOCIDE COMMEMORATION

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the 84th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. This is an event that has defined the Armenian people for the past 84 years, and my thoughts and sympathies are again with them as they remember these events.

It is with a great sense of sorrow that we mark the 84th year since the tragic genocide and exile of the Armenian people. The Turkish Ottoman Empire expelled nearly 1.5 million Armenians as part of a staged campaign. In doing so, the world witnessed one of the most sobering events in modern history. As the first genocide of the 20th century, the period between 1915 and 1918 deserves our attention and respect, and it should remind us of the need to keep all those who perished during the Genocide alive in our memory.

While humankind has the ability to sponsor acts of great kindness and sacrifice, we also have the capacity for great evil. By pausing to commemorate the Armenian Genocide, we ensure that it will never slip into the recesses of history. Along with the Holocaust, the Armenian Genocide signifies our ability to promote evil, but if we close our eyes to the tragedies of the past, we risk the chance of repeating them in the future.

Sadly, the Armenian American community has its roots in the Armenian Genocide. Many individuals living here in the United States either lost family members at the hands of the Ottomans, or are survivors themselves. They have risen above adversity to become prominent and successful citizens despite a tragic past. The Armenian American community has been vocal in expressing its anguish about the Genocide. It is my hope that their perseverance in marking this event each year, as well as our own efforts here in the United States Senate, will be enough to allow us to remember the lessons of the Genocide. We are constantly forced to relearn the effects of evil unchecked, but I hope, in this case, we will be guided to a better future.

#### SECURITY AT AMERICA'S NUCLEAR LABORATORIES

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I would like to talk briefly on the critically important hearings being conducted in Congress regarding the alleged national security breaks at our Department of Energy nuclear weapons laboratories. As a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I am committed to finding the answer to what may have happened and ensure that our national security is just that—secure.

I share the concern of most Americans that starting during the Reagan Administration, Chinese spies reportedly stole secrets from New Mexico's Los Alamos National Laboratory to assist China in developing advanced nuclear weapons. I am also concerned with the perceived inaction by individuals and agencies within our government for almost ten years. However, I strongly discourage my colleagues and others in framing this issue in partisan terms because the timeline we are discussing here today includes three Administrations of both parties. The goal of placing blame on Republicans or Democrats is counterproductive to the ultimate need of finding answers that lead to solutions.

The American public is entitled to know whether critically important secrets were stolen from our nuclear laboratories. We, as citizens of a democracy, also have the right to know what steps our government took—or failed to take—to protect our interests and livelihood. The accusations surrounding the Los Alamos Nuclear Laboratory have shaken the trust Americans have in our national security, our government, and our developing relationship with China, the most populated country in the world. It is the responsibility of this committee, Congress as a whole, and the Administration to provide the American public with the answers they deserve.

Accountability and accuracy must be established in this matter. However, knowing what happened and who was responsible is not enough. I am hopeful that out of this committee hearing and