

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New York.

PUBLIC SAFETY INFRASTRUCTURE

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise today to bring to our attention two distinct problems facing our States and particularly our communities in New York as a result of the attacks on September 11. I have just come from a meeting with a number of mayors from cities all over the country, including mayors who joined us by conference phone, Democrats, Republicans, large cities, medium- and small-sized cities. They all have said with a single voice that the impact on our public safety infrastructure of the attacks is such that they are bleeding dollars. They are paying overtime constantly to our police officers, our firefighters, our first responders. They do not have the funds to provide the protection and the quick response our citizens deserve and expect.

I can speak specifically about New York. We have an economic situation where we face a \$10 billion shortfall in State revenues over the next 18 months. In addition, our New York State comptroller, Carl McCall, has identified \$940 million in potential State and local government costs due to the current congruence of events.

This means that city governments, county governments, far away from Ground Zero, are faced with hundreds of calls about potential biological or chemical materials, particularly anthrax, to which they are responding as we expect them to. They are faced with threats coming in—both credible and, frankly, not, but we have to follow each one up—potential threats to our infrastructure, our powerplants, our bridges, our ports, our airports.

As a result, we have a tremendous pressure buildup on our local governments. As I heard today, it is something that is being faced by governments across our country. That is why I strongly support the plan with which Senators BYRD and REID are coming forward, to provide additional funding for public safety needs. I am calling on our colleagues and the Federal Government to create a public safety block grant program to help communities plan, strictly for our emergencies, and to be ready no matter what happens in their communities.

Why is a public safety block grant so necessary?

First, September 11 changed everything. Anybody who wants to pretend it didn't is sending a false message to the people we represent. Our cities and our counties are on the front lines in the war against terrorism. When a threat is called in to our local fire department or our local mayor's office, they cannot wait for some kind of Federal response. They have to send out those first responders. They are on a heightened state of alert as they have

been told by our President, by Governor Ridge, and by Attorney General Ashcroft. A public safety block grant would help our communities provide these additional resources for police, fire, ambulance, emergency, airports, waterways, public transit infrastructure, chemical, and nuclear plants.

I think we should reinvigorate the concept of civil defense, using more volunteers to supplement our first line responders. Some of our colleagues, including Senators MCCAIN, BAYH, and LIEBERMAN, have recently spoken out about the importance of encouraging Americans to become involved in civil defense. I believe a public safety block grant could use funds to further that idea and help us prepare better and involve so many of the citizens who want to participate in protecting our homeland front. If we are at war, which we are told we are, which we believe we are—we are fighting two wars. We are fighting a war abroad in Afghanistan against the terrorist networks, and we are fighting a war right here at home, and we need to be prepared on both fronts.

The eligibility criteria would be based on several factors. Certainly, communities would have to be ready to use those funds for post-September 11 needs, not because they didn't budget well before the date of the attacks but because of the additional burdens they now face.

I believe medium- and larger-sized cities and counties should receive direct assistance. Smaller communities could go through the State, based on the CDBG program. I hope communities would have to submit a plan explaining how they would use the funds, but that they would be given broad discretion because they are best able to defend their own communities. They should be given that opportunity.

I think we need this legislation now because our homeland defense will only be as strong as the weakest link at the State and local level. We need our citizens more involved in civil defense to supplement those of our people on the front line in the uniformed services. I think we recognize this now is an absolute necessity. I certainly support the efforts of Senator BYRD and Senator REID, combined with Senator BAUCUS, to have a homeland recovery and security package, but I do not think it will work unless we provide funds directly to our cities and counties, unless we recognize that they have to be the front line defense in the war against terrorism here at home.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senator from Virginia is recognized to offer an amendment on which there shall be 60 minutes of debate.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Will the Senator yield for just 1 minute for opening remarks from the manager of the bill?

Mr. ALLEN. Certainly.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Virginia for yielding.

Let me quickly support my colleague from New York in her remarks about how important it is for us, as we fashion homeland defense, to be cognizant, as Mayor Giuliani beautifully showed us, so that the mayors and local officials are really on the front line. Our Federal Government needs to recognize the great role they have played and can play. Our budget should reflect the principle of getting those resources down to the lower level. I thank the Senator from New York for her very instructive remarks to us this morning.

Let me, as I begin again this morning on the DC bill, very briefly—within 1 minute—just hit the highlights of the bill before we turn to the three or four amendments we may be considering today, with that of Senator ALLEN being the first one up for us to consider.

First, there is great consensus in this underlying bill. Again, I thank my colleague from Ohio, Senator DEWINE, for his excellent work. We thank Mr. BYRD, the Senator from West Virginia, and the Senator from Alaska, Mr. STEVENS, for helping us get this bill to the floor, working across party lines and in a very dedicated way to bring a good bill to this floor.

The five points in this bill are:

No. 1, this is the first bill over \$7 billion that comes to the floor in 5 years without the Control Board being in effect. So there is great responsibility that we have to make sure this and future budgets reflect the fiscal discipline that is now a part—and hopefully will be even a stronger part—of the District's future. The budget is not only in balance but the District is in a surplus, having swung \$1 billion from a deficit now to a surplus. We would like to keep it that way.

There are going to be great challenges ahead, but Senator DEWINE and I are committed to fiscal discipline, transparency, accountability, and excellence in management for the District.

No. 2, there is an underlying principle—we will debate some of that this morning—about local decisionmaking. We believe generally local governments should be allowed to spend their money and local funds in the ways they are directed. There is some debate about that issue. That debate will take place this morning.

No. 3, there is a significant investment in child welfare. I want to say on behalf of Senator DEWINE and myself and many of the Members who helped, we are investing \$40 million in new moneys to set up a better child welfare system in the District. Too many children have died. There are too many families torn asunder. There are too many children without parents, too many parents without children who