

that boys and men have traditionally had. Athletic training and competition have the same benefits for females as for males: teaching them not only how to score goals but also how to set goals—and work hard to achieve them, promoting cooperation and teamwork, developing leadership skills, and instilling self-confidence.

Mr. President, I have had the opportunity to serve in the Senate with two great athletes, two Hall of Fame athletes. One is Bill Bradley, who until recently was a Senator from New Jersey. What a fine man he is. A lot of his greatness was as a result of his athletic abilities.

Senator JIM BUNNING from Kentucky, with whom I have had the pleasure to serve and get to know, is a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame, as Senator Bradley is of the Basketball Hall of Fame. JIM BUNNING is here for a lot of different reasons, however most notably, this man, as he went through his baseball career, developed this tremendous confidence. Anyone who knows JIM BUNNING knows of his tremendous self-confidence. That came as a result of his athletic prowess, ability, and hard work. That is what athletics is all about, and it works for women as it does for men.

At a time when far too many American youth lead sedentary lifestyles and are obese, we must support programs that lead to improved fitness and health. Adolescent female athletes are more likely than non-athletes to develop a positive body image and less likely to become pregnant. They also are at less risk for diseases and health problems that afflict women like osteoporosis or breast cancer.

In addition, sports provide a safe and health alternative to drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, and to anti-social behavior. Students who participate in these programs feel a greater connection to school, have an additional incentive to attend classes and keep their grades up so they can maintain their eligibility.

I am disappointed, if not surprised, that some critics would like to halt this progress. They are making misleading and unfair criticisms of title IX. We are watching what this commission does this week in Washington.

So while we remain vigilant against attacks on title IX, we must also push for its continued implementation and enforcement, and the only changes we will allow will be changes for the better.

Often, we hear that girls and women are the beneficiaries of title IX. I'm sure they are. But I think it is more accurate to say that we all benefit from this important civil rights legislation. Certainly, American society as a whole is better when women—who after all make up more than half of our population—are provided a fair and equal opportunity to develop their full potential.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time between 1:30 and 2 be under the control of Senator HOLLINGS; the time between 2 and 3 be under the control of the majority leader or his designee; the time from 3 to 3:15 be under the control of Senator HARKIN; the time between 3:15 and 3:30 be under the control of Senator CORZINE; the time between 3:30 and 4 to be under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I understand we have the next 30 minutes on our side in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is correct.

REFLECTING ON THE PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise to very briefly comment on the President's message last night and to initiate my own reflection, which I hope to have the opportunity to continue over the next several days and weeks as we respond to the vision that he painted for us in a very eloquent, very direct, and very focused way last night.

Last night, the President said we will not deny or ignore or pass along today's problems to future leaders and future generations. He said we will confront them head on, we will confront them directly, we will do it with clarity, and we will do it with courage.

He is right. We have much to do. And our success in this body very much depends on our own focus and our own clarity and our own courage.

Let me begin with health care—specifically, this whole issue of Medicare, strengthening and improving Medicare and prescription drugs.

Last night, the President made it clear that if seniors and individuals with disabilities are satisfied, if they like and are pleased with the Medicare coverage they have today—the way the Medicare system works for them today—that they will, in this vision that he paints, have the option of not changing anything, for keeping it just the way it is. Remember, about two out of three of our seniors and individuals with disabilities today do have some prescription drug coverage. Many of those individuals may say: I don't want to change anything.

He also made it clear—and this is what is exciting to me as a physician and as one who has taken care of thou-

sands of Medicare patients—that seniors and individuals with disabilities should have another option, another alternative. That is best understood by saying they will have an opportunity to choose from among a menu of options, much like BILL FRIST does as a Senator or Senator KIT BOND from Missouri does or Senator HAGEL or others.

We hear from the other side of forcing people into HMOs. Let's make it very clear that the option the President began to spell out last night—that I believe in heartily—is that we should give seniors the same options we have to choose from among a variety of plans, not just HMOs, as the other side of the aisle comes back to because they know HMOs are demonized today, but an option of coordinated plans which include prescription drugs.

Nine million Federal employees have this option for a type of care that we all consider very good, that does allow us to choose our own doctors, if you choose such a plan. And those are the sort of options that will be made for seniors. It works for us. It works for 9 million employees. It works for our staffs. So don't seniors deserve the same opportunities?

It is going to take real courage for anyone to tell Americans they should not have the same options that we have, which is the President's proposal: to give those same opportunities to seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Opponents of choice in health care for seniors are saying the President's plan forces individuals to give up their doctors, their family doctors, or forces them to use a particular physician. Indeed, if a senior so chooses to go that route, maybe for larger benefits, higher prescription drug coverage, that may be one route to going in, but that is not what we necessarily have to do. We have that broader choice. To say that people are going to be forced into plans where they have to give up their physicians, that is not what happens to 9 million Federal employees unless that is what they choose to do. I am in the same program, and I choose my own doctor.

What we are hearing is a lot of the same old, tired rhetoric. And it really comes down to scare tactics. When we last talked about Medicare, improving Medicare, in the Senate, this word, "Mediscare," became popularized because that is what people saw, that is what the rhetoric resulted in.

Indeed, some people are using these "Mediscare" tactics to frighten seniors and to create anxiety and insecurity. It is time for us to pull together, in a bipartisan way, to elevate the discussion well above that.

The pursuit of these scare tactics results in nothing but fear and anxiety. Our seniors simply deserve better.

The President talked about the Federal employees' health care program as one model. Under that model, there is a strong public-private partnership where you get the very best out of the