

services would be made available to all of our elderly citizens in the United States.

It would make the coverage available nationwide. It would establish strict qualifications in the Medicare Program for specially trained vision rehabilitation professionals who operate under physician supervision and allow them to provide the highest possible quality services in the home when deemed medically necessary.

One in five older Americans, over 7 million people, report some degree of serious vision impairment. More than 700,000 older Americans are legally blind. According to the CDC, falls among older people cost the Government more than \$20 billion a year, and vision problems were specifically cited as one of the leading causes of these falls. If only one in five of the hip fractures due to vision impairment were prevented, each year the annual cost savings would be hundreds of millions of dollars.

Nearly anyone suffering from vision loss can benefit from vision rehabilitation services that can help patients make the most of whatever vision they do have remaining.

Specifically, this bill takes a number of important actions. It establishes national coverage under Medicare for the provision of rehabilitation services. It defines rehabilitation services as services provided to a person with a vision impairment under a plan of care developed by a physician, allowing these services to be furnished both in-office and in a patient's home. It defines a vision rehabilitation professional as well as setting out the educational criteria these providers must have.

This legislation ensures payment under the existing physician fee schedule. That is important. There was an awful lot of work put into developing this legislation, so we did not have to create a new or separate physician fee schedule. The legislation also requires the patient care plan be developed by a physician in order to receive reimbursement under Medicare. That plan has to attest that vision rehabilitation services are medically necessary, and is a plan that periodically is reviewed by a physician.

It is a strong, focused program that provides coverage for these very important services under Medicare. In over a 5-year period, the independently estimated cost is less than \$10 million—less than \$10 million, to begin to address one of the leading causes of accidents that disable our elderly citizens in their homes. It is less than \$10 million over a 5-year period to increase independence, to increase quality of life, and to provide a better quality of care in a home setting.

I think this is an important piece of legislation that can make an enormous difference for millions of older Americans under Medicare.

I do thank the cosponsors who have already agreed to support this legislation—Senator STEVENS, Senator

MCCAIN, Senator COLLINS, Senator BUNNING, Senator SPECTER, Senator BURNS, Senator ALLEN, Senator KERRY, Senator LINCOLN, Senator MILLER, Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator CANTWELL, Senator KENNEDY, and Senator LANDRIEU.

It is a strong, bipartisan coalition that will work throughout this year to see that this legislation is signed into law, making a difference by adding vision rehabilitation services to Medicare and making that difference in the lives of millions of elderly Americans.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, this coming Monday is the last Monday in May. Since the adoption of the National Holiday Act, Public Law 90-363, the last Monday in May has been celebrated as Memorial Day. The origins of Memorial Day extend far earlier than 1971, stretching back to the Civil War, when the practice of decorating the graves of fallen soldiers became widely practiced in the United States. And in the earlier years, the people, particularly the people of the southern states, celebrated this as Decoration Day.

Honoring the fallen in battle is an ancient custom, extending at least to the ancient Greeks. Thucydides provides us with one example. It was the custom in Athens to conduct an elaborate funeral for all those killed in battle. A sacrifice would be made, the fallen laid to rest with ceremony, and then a funeral oration would be given. After the first battles of the Peloponnesian War, the brilliant politician and general, Pericles, was the orator. He used his speech to honor the dead but also to pay homage to the state for which they had fought. His love and admiration for Athens reflects the feelings of patriotism, pride, and love for the United States that have swelled in our breasts since the terrible events of September 11, 2001, and since the brave performance put on by U.S. forces in Iraq this spring.

Pericles said, in part:

... fix your eyes upon the greatness of Athens, until you become filled with the love of her; and when you are impressed by the spectacle of her glory, reflect that this empire has been acquired by men who knew their duty and had the courage to do it, who in the hour of conflict had the fear of dishonor always present in them, and who, if ever they failed in an enterprise, would not allow their virtues to be lost to their country, but freely gave their lives as the fairest offering which they could present at her feast. The sacrifice which they collectively made was individually repaid to them; for they received again each one for himself praise which grows not old, and the noblest of all tombs, I speak not of that in which their remains are laid, but that in which their glory survives, and is proclaimed always and on every fitting occasion both in word and in deed. For the whole earth is the tomb of famous men; not only are they commemorated by columns and in-

scriptions in their own country, but in foreign lands there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stones but in the hearts of men.

So in the hearts of every family reunited, every child now free to attend school, everyone of every faith now allowed to worship freely, dwell the unwritten memorials to American fighting men and women. In France, in Flanders field, in Belgium, in Austria, Sweden, all across Europe, in the Philippines and across Southeast Asia, still beat hearts that remember the faces of American G.I.s who liberated them.

At home, as well, the fallen live on. In the hearts of their families, in the caring hands that place poppies on graves in military cemeteries, in the flags snapping proudly in the breeze at doorsteps around the Nation, the Nation's fallen heroes are remembered. Without them, our Nation and our history would be forever altered. Without the heroes of Bunker Hill and Lexington and Yorktown, we might still be a British colony. Without the heroes of Gettysburg and Appomattox, we might not be a United States but two separate nations. Without the heroes of the Ardennes and Ypres, of Normandy and Tarawa, the globe would be redrawn in very different shapes. Without the heroes at the Yalu River and at Da Nang, the Iron Curtain might have encircled the globe.

To each generation of heroes, we offer our silent thanks. And to the Creator, we must offer our prayers that the succeeding generations will be equally brave and equally patriotic, as ready to meet the rigors and challenges to come as are our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines today. We must hope that we bequeath to our future generations a nation worthy of such sacrifice, a nation, as Pericles proclaimed of Athens "... for whose sake these men nobly fought and died; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them; and every one of us who survive should gladly toil on her behalf."

The United States' guiding philosophy, our signal principles of freedom, liberty, opportunity, of government by the people—these are the enduring monuments of America's greatness. They are our greatest treasure, to be guarded most jealously and defended most zealously. For them have the fallen filled our military cemeteries. Even as we continue the so-called "war on terror," we must guard against undermining our principles for the sake of some gossamer illusion of security.

Our government must operate openly, before the view of the people. The people's branch—here it is. The people's branch, the Congress, must defend its prerogatives lest the Executive assume the powers of a tyrant. We must deal freely and fairly and honestly on the world stage, using our strength for the common good and maintaining the friendship built upon freely spilled blood and shared sacrifice. And we must treat our people as citizens, not

potential terrorists, to be profiled and bugged and tapped and taped and held indefinitely without the full protections of the law. All the law enforcement techniques and technologies in the world will not eliminate all risk. If we are to honor the greatness of our Nation and the sacrifice of all those who have laid down their lives in her defense, we must be careful not to frighten ourselves into some kind of quasi police state.

This Memorial Day, we honor the fallen from our wars by marking their graves with flowers and flags. In life, they were just like us. They came from all walks of life, from every State and territory, from farms and city streets. They were young, and funny, and brave. They were our children, our brothers and sisters, our fathers and mothers. They were members of many families and members of the American family. In death, they are a silent reminder of the high price some must pay so that the rest of us might enjoy the benefits of living in this great Nation. Put a flag or a flower down this weekend, but for the rest of the year, guard dearly the principles of the Nation they fought and died for. The greatest and most lasting memorial to our Nation's dead is to cherish and pass what is best about our Nation.

I close with the words of Van Dyer in his poem "America For Me."

As schoolchildren, we all memorized this poem and others like it:

'Tis fine to see the Old World, and travel up
and down

Among the famous palaces and cities of re-
nown,

To admire the crumbly castles and the statues
of the kings,—

But now I think I've had enough of anti-
quated things.

So it's home again, and home again, America
for me!

My heart is turning home again, and there I
long to be

In the land of youth and freedom beyond the
ocean bars,

Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag
is full of stars.

Oh, London is a man's town, there's power in
the air;

And Paris is a woman's town, with flowers in
her hair;

And it's sweet to dream in Venice, and it's
great to study Rome,

But when it comes to living, there is no
place like home.

I like the German fir-woods, in green battal-
ions drilled;

I like the gardens of Versailles with flashing
fountains filled;

But, oh, to take your hand, my dear, and
ramble for a day

In the friendly western woodland where Na-
ture has her way!

I know that Europe's wonderful, yet some-
thing seems to lack!

The Past is too much with her, and the peo-
ple looking back.

But the glory of the Present is to make the
Future free,—

We love our land for what she is and what
she is to be.

Oh, it's home again, home again, America for
me!

I want a ship that's westward bound to
plough the rolling sea,

To the blessed Land of Room Enough beyond
the ocean bars,

Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag
is full of stars.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUNUNU). The Senator from Missouri.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
S. RES. 154

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 154 regarding the European Union action against agricultural biotechnology, a resolution submitted earlier today by me and Senators TALENT, LINCOLN, LUGAR, and BAUCUS. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I object to the request made by my good friend from Missouri, that land from which Old Crumb, that great hunting dog, came. I believe it is Warrensburg, MO, where that statue stands today, the statute of Old Crumb, that great hunting dog.

But I must on this occasion object. I do it at the behest of another Senator. I assure the distinguished Senator that I bear no ill will toward him, certainly. But, on this occasion, I have promised that I would object, and I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objec-
tion is heard.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I understand how this place works. We knew there was to be an objection. But we have submitted a resolution which will be referred to committee because it is a matter of great importance. While apparently 99 Senators did not have an objection, we will have an opportunity when this matter is reported out of the appropriate committee to deal with what I think is a very serious issue.

This resolution before us today expresses strong support for President Bush's decision to stand up for our trade rights before the World Trade Organization. The action taken by our President is right on principle, right on law, right on science, and it is morally right.

Two years ago, the European Environment Commissioner, Margot Wallstrom, told a news conference the following:

We have already waited too long to act. The moratorium is illegal and not justified. The value of biotechnology is poorly appreciated in Europe and there's a risk the biotechnology industry will not develop.

In short, we could not have said it better. We appreciate the Commissioner's courage to be so candid.

Since reason has not prevailed in Europe, it is time for our overtaxed patience to give way to the need to exercise our rights before the World Trade Organization. If the Europeans had

been satisfied to exist as a "plant technology free zone" without aggressively attempting to influence other nations, this action would not have become as imperative as it is.

Mr. President, this European ban on plant biotechnology is a lesson about the serious harm that can come in the form of unintended consequences. Too-clever politicians in Europe, coupled with the hysterical anticommmercial activists, decided they could whip their public into a frenzy and shield the European Union producers from U.S. competition by suggesting that the new technology is not safe.

Even perhaps more venal—if that is possible—certain leftwing organizations decided they could raise fears and cause unfounded scares in the public and raise money through solicitations to fund their own salaries by spreading lies about the food that we in the United States eat every day.

But now that the European Union politicians are listening to their scientists and realize that the technology is safe, they say they cannot accept it because their public is against it. In other words, they now claim to be hostage to the misinformation they created and, indeed, fostered.

Consequently, we now have a major trade infraction. Our farmers have lost \$300 million a year in corn exports. The European public doubts the credibility of their science community. European investment in new plant science is in sharp decline. Their farmers do not have access to new technology. Most importantly, world-renowned scientists are leaving the European Union.

They are coming to Missouri, where our leading scientists, such as Dr. Roger Beachy and Dr. Peter Raven, are hiring them and providing them a refuge where they can practice their science free from the Luddite hysteria or "Eurosclerosis" from which they came.

But most tragically—most tragically—the countries in the developing world have been frightened into refusing to feed their starving people the food we have sent them—which is food we eat—because they fear the hysterical European rejection is more serious than death by starvation. We have sent food, humanitarian efforts, to aid and keep these people alive. Unfortunately, their leaders have been frightened by Europeans who say they will never import from them again.

Regrettably, I would say that Europe's fastest-growing exports are hysteria and underappreciated plant scientists. We would like Europe to join us in our efforts to help feed the hungry in the world, not scare the world into needless, wanton starvation.

I do not believe this is where the Europeans wanted to be when they started this nonsense but this is where it has predictably taken them.

This technology was developed, studied, tested, reviewed, approved, planted on several hundred million acres over 7 years, rereviewed and reapproved,