The States are facing tough financial situations. The General Accounting Office found that since January 2001, twenty-three States have made changes that would decrease the availability of child care assistance; while only nine States made changes that could increase child care availability.

I want to underscore this point.

According to the GAO, nearly half of the States are decreasing the availability of child care for working families. And this report may just be the tip of the iceberg. Federal funding is critical to reverse this trend.

My colleagues must understand the importance of this issue. By adopting this amendment, we can help families move off of welfare permanently. Or we can prevent them from needing welfare assistance in the first place.

I see this amendment not as a choice, but as a necessity. I urge my colleagues to support the Snowe-Dodd amendment, to support our working families and to support our youngest children.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time under morning business has expired. Morning business is closed.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EVERYONE ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 4, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4) to reauthorize and improve the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families, improve access to quality child care, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Grassley (for Snowe) amendment No. 2937, to provide additional funding for child care.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). Under the previous order, the time until 12:15 p.m. shall be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today in support of H.R. 4, the Personal Responsibility and Individual Development for Everyone Act, called the PRIDE Act.

Throughout our Nation's history, we have seen wonderful examples of individuals, with a little drive and ambition, seizing one of the abundant opportunities this great Nation has to offer, and move, literally, from nothing in their pockets to a lifetime of incredible success.

That being said, up until 1996, this notion of America being ''the land of opportunity'' was nearly unknown to millions of welfare recipients who were bogged down by the stifling, cash assistance welfare system our Nation had embraced for over 100 years.

With the enactment of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families legislation—we call it TANF—in 1996, that all changed. We offered individuals who had previously been shut out of the American dream the opportunity to eliminate poverty and move their families toward the empowering goal of self-sufficiency.

Welfare reform has been one of the most successful social policy reforms in U.S. history. We have seen millions of people focus their energies and efforts on their responsibilities and acquiring an attitude of providing for themselves. They have learned it by daily practice.

Nearly 3 million families have been lifted out of poverty. Employment by mothers most at risk to go on welfare has risen by 40 percent since 1995. Each of us in this body is encouraged to see the profound, positive effects TANF has had on the lives of those who require temporary assistance.

Caseloads are down 58 percent, and assistance recipients are working more than ever before. Thus, these hard-working people are leading themselves back to self-sufficiency.

As the Department of Health and Human Services has reported, welfare caseload reductions are primarily a result of implementing the welfare reforms contained in the original TANF legislation—and not merely due to the robust economy of the late 1990s.

I think we also need to recognize that the States themselves have held the key to the success of these programs by taking advantage of the flexibility built into the original TANF legislation.

Many States throughout the Nation have offered welfare plans and created specific, effective programs that are working well with their constituencies. The States' work has been well documented, as many States have reported caseload declines of over 70 percent since 1996.

TANF funds transferred by the States and used for childcare funding have also been an enormously positive development, and States are matching Federal spending in the area of childcare.

This is creating a good foundation where working parents can go back to work knowing that their children are being well cared for. I need only look to my home State of Utah to see the successes of the 1996 TANF law.

Since August of 1996, TANF rolls have decreased over 45 percent, while the quality and professional attention given to recipients has been steadily going up.

Utah has been a pioneer State in the development of personal, value-added attention and planning for those who are receiving assistance. Universal engagement of every assistance recipient is a necessity, and I applaud my home State of Utah for leading the way in this area. I also thank Chairman GRASSLEY for putting the provision in the bill.

My home State has also pioneered work in the promotion of marriage and family formation. Under then-Governor Michael Leavitt, Utah was the first State in the Nation to form a commission on marriage, which was charged with the overreaching goal of strengthening marriages in Utah. I am pleased to see this bill includes $200 million in matching grants for States to provide marriage promotion and responsible fatherhood programs.

The marriage unit is the most fundamental in society. If the bond of marriage weakens, so does our society, including the rising generation. It is widely recognized that a healthy, loving marriage between a man and a woman not only provides great personal happiness, it also creates the safest place for children to thrive and benefit from the full emotional, moral, and educational benefits that two married parents can provide.

I also commend President Bush for his commitment and efforts to strengthen healthy marriages.

Let me turn to another important component of the bill, the family self-sufficiency plan. Under current law, States are under no obligation to understand and assess the circumstances of each recipient receiving assistance. However, under the universal engagement provisions of this bill, it will be incumbent upon each State to meet with each recipient and create a plan, using all the support tools available to the State, to help the recipient achieve self-sufficiency.

This is a very important measure because it seeks to give each and every recipient a roadmap toward independence and success—a light at the end of the tunnel. It also signals to States that all TANF families deserve a chance to become self-sufficient and no one can be left to fall through the cracks in the system.

In Utah, I have seen that many of these parents, hard-working people, young and old, end up finding great self satisfaction in giving their gift of skill at work, at giving themselves to a task at hand so thoroughly that they have a meaningful relationship with their work. I think we will all agree that sometimes it is not easy to dive into your work with enthusiasm, but sometimes it is necessary and appropriate.

That is why it is so important that the work requirements are increased in this bill. The core work requirement is increased from 20 hours per week to 24 hours per week. Total hours required for a State to receive full credit increases from 30 hours per week to 34 hours per week for single-parent families. These are sensible, reasonable requirements.

Two-parent families will be required to work 39 hours per week, or 55 hours per week if they receive subsidized childcare. States will receive partial credit if individuals work 20 hours per

week, and extra credit if they work more than 34 hours per week. Current law provides full credit only at 30 hours.

Again, these changes in the current law will help us make real progress.

It seems obvious that the more a person sets goals and takes responsibility for the career they want, the more they will be able to decide if a particular job fits into the scheme of their life. The harder they work—that is, the more hours they work—the more they understand why they are working at a particular job and how their hard work will benefit their individual families.

I believe the most important new provision in this bill is the establishment of a meaningful State participation rate. For years now, States have had no reason to actively recruit adults into industrious work and work-related activities. Under this bill, States would be required to have 70 percent of their caseload involved in approved work activities by the year 2008. This would require States to significantly ramp up their efforts to engage a much greater number of families in activities that count toward the work participation rate.

Right now, the majority of adults receiving assistance are reporting zero hours of activity. It is time we recognize that with an effective participation rate, and by the elimination of the caseload reduction credit in the 1996 welfare law, we will encourage people to commit to careers, to goals, to real recovery.

Another striking result I would like to note has been the effect of welfare reform on African-American children. For the 25 years before welfare reform, before the TANF bill in 1996, the percentage of African-American children living in poverty remained virtually unchanged. But since welfare reform, the poverty rate among those children has dropped from 41.5 percent in 1995 to 32.1 percent in 2002—still way too high, but it has been a definite, dramatic drop, and TANF deserves most of the credit for that situation. About 1 million African-American children—roughly the entire population of Dallas, Detroit, or San Diego—are no longer in poverty because of welfare reform.

There is still much to be done. Currently, 58 percent of those on welfare are not working or training to work, and 2 million families remain completely dependent on welfare for their survival. The full potential of this legislation has not been realized because of lax enforcement and efforts to undermine the principles and goals of reform. Let's look at this.

Among poor families with children, one-quarter to one-third do not work at all. The rest work sometimes, but not full time or year-round.

Only a fourth of poor families have full-time employment, and by that I mean 40 hours a week throughout the year. Because of this low rate, many remain poor.

Overall, among all poor families with children, most adults work only 16 hours a week whether the economy is good or bad. If all poor families with children had just one full-time adult employed year-round 40 hours a week, America's child poverty rate would drop dramatically. Many poor families would immediately be lifted out of poverty.

Last September, with my support, the Finance Committee reported this bill to reauthorize TANF and other programs for the next 5 years and to strengthen welfare reform further. This would greatly increase work requirements for working families so that 70 percent are participating in work or job preparation activities by fiscal year 2008.

All recipients should work full time either in a job or in programs designed to help them achieve independence. A 4-week cushion is included for vacation and sick leave, simulating a typical work schedule in the United States. And the plan makes special accommodations for parents with infants and individuals who need substance abuse treatment, rehabilitation, or special training.

One area of concern for me, and the citizens of Utah, is the difficulty many recipients will have in meeting the work requirement when they are unable to defeat an addictive drug habit or suffer from a devastating disability. I suspect many of those individuals who remain on welfare are those with drug dependencies or other ailments that are difficult to treat.

Under the current bill, only 3 months of rehabilitation services may be counted as an acceptable activity. In the Finance Committee, I offered an amendment that was adopted that extends this credit an additional 3 months as long as the State deems it necessary and the recipient is engaged in increasing amounts of work or job-readiness activity. I hope my colleagues agree with me that this is the right way to help these individuals get free of dependency and find meaningful employment.

Another amendment of mine that was included in the committee bill established a pre-sanction review. Families in Utah who are in need of services, such as substance abuse treatment, must receive the assistance they need to overcome barriers to employment. This is why I believe States must conduct a pre-sanction review before taking action against parents who are considered noncompliant. It does not seem fair that a parent is subjected to sanctions and case closures because of their State's limited substance abuse treatment capacity. If substance abuse treatment services are not available to the parent, States should refrain from sanctions or case closures.

The review established by my amendment requires States to review a recipient's self-sufficiency plan and consult with the recipient before enforcing any sanctions or taking away the recipient's cash assistance or welfare services. This provision is necessary to give recipients with significant barriers to work, such as a disability or a drug dependency, a real chance to meet the State's requirements prior to having their assistance taken away.

Another important area I would like to discuss is childcare. We all now agree that childcare is an essential part of encouraging people to work. I am pleased to see that this bill includes an additional $1 billion in funding for childcare. Even so, I think we need to go a step further. And I compliment, in particular, the distinguished Senator from Maine, Ms. SNOWE, and the distinguished Senator from Connecticut, Mr. DODD, with whom years ago I worked to pass the first childcare bill in history. He has kept at it and kept on it, and I personally respect and appreciate it. Of course, I am a cosponsor of this amendment as well. There are countless examples of how our country benefits from programs that allow hard-working parents to stay employed, and we need to support the efforts of working families by finding ways to help with childcare assistance. Parents need to know they have access to quality childcare.

I would like to make it clear that with the current budget situation, I am not advocating for large increases in Federal discretionary spending. I am very concerned about the fact that the Federal Government is running a deficit and that our Federal debt is accumulating. High deficits and a mountain of Federal debt represent real obligations that hurt our economic security, both now and in the future, and hurt every person we are trying to help here.

That being said, I recognize the very real and pressing need for improved childcare services. The 1990 childcare law Senator DODD and I helped get passed was one of our most important initiatives, and certainly I think each of us claims and feels it was each of our important initiatives. I was pleased to join Senator DODD in that effort.

It is clear to me after much study that the funding contained in the finance bill is simply not adequate. I am supportive of increasing that funding even more, provided they are accompanied by responsible offsets to hold down the costs and, in this case, this amendment will.

We should recognize that many assistance recipients across our country will struggle to meet the requirement for increased work hours if they are not able to find and use quality childcare services. While we are trying to get people to work, we ought to try to help their children in the process. Funding for childcare should go hand in hand with an increase in the work requirement. I and others—Senator SNOWE in particular—have fought very hard for that in the Finance Committee. We cannot expect these mothers and fathers to feel comfortable

leaving children alone or in the care of someone who is not competent in order to meet a higher work requirement standard.

A question we often ask ourselves is, ''Is this a perfect bill?'' I would have to say my answer to that question would be ''no.'' But I am sure there are many on both sides who would like to change it one way or the other. Most people have to admit this represents a compromise of many competing interests. If I had written the bill, I surely would have done some things differently. But I think Senator GRASSLEY and Senator BAUCUS have done a terrific job on this bill under the circumstances. These types of bills are always hard fought. This is a good one with sensible, reasonable compromises.

In closing, I want to again personally recognize the substantial work of Chairman GRASSLEY, the Democratic leader on the committee, Senator BAUCUS, and the Senate leadership for bringing this very important bill to the floor.

Over the last 2 years, it has been my pleasure to work with many of my esteemed colleagues on the Finance Committee from both parties to create an effective welfare reauthorization bill. I also thank Becky Shipp, who now serves on the Finance Committee, for her tireless work over the past 18 months and prior to that to help craft a welfare bill that will improve the lives of many Americans.

My own staff, headed by Jace Johnson and Jenny George, has done a terrific job.

These people did superior work for me and the people of Utah for almost 10 years and I was very fortunate to have Becky and now Jace, as members of my staff.

In closing, let there be no misunderstanding as to what this bill does. It strengthens and improves the current welfare laws and gives poor families a realistic chance at achieving self-fulfillment.

The most generous behavior Americans could choose is taking responsibility for ourselves, our thoughts, our actions, and our needs. The most beneficial act we in Congress can perform is to allow those less fortunate to succeed and to help them meet their responsibilities for themselves, their families, and their communities. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation because I am confident this bill, when passed, will benefit the entire country.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the final 4 minutes prior to the 12:15 p.m. vote be equally divided between Senators DODD and SNOWE, with Senator DODD in control of the first 2 minutes and Senator SNOWE in control of the final 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CARPER. Reserving the right to object. I request, if I could, of the Senator from Utah—I understand under a previous unanimous consent agreement yesterday I would have 10 minutes to speak. Is that right? I want to make sure I still have my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I may be allowed to speak for up to 12 minutes under the time under the control of the Democratic side.

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

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Delaware for graciously allowing me to take a few minutes here to speak on the amendment I am offering along with my colleague from Maine, Senator SNOWE. I thank her at the outset for her eloquent comments yesterday about the importance of this amendment and her kind comments about the Senator from Connecticut as well.

Let me also very quickly, while he is still here with us on the floor, commend my good friend from Utah. I remember with fondness, going back almost 15 or 16 years ago, when we offered the very first effort to include as part of our efforts on behalf of working families of this country a childcare proposal. That never would have happened without the tremendous leadership of the Senator from Utah, who was pretty much alone, I might say, in those days, in advocating this important initiative on the part of the Federal Government to try to do something to help these families who were trying to stay on the work rolls.

I would be remiss in any discussion about a childcare proposal not to reference the incredible work of the Senator from Utah. Again, I thank him for his leadership and I thank him as well for his cosponsorship of this amendment we are offering today.

Mr. HATCH. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DODD. I am happy to yield.

Mr. HATCH. I thank my colleague for his kind remarks and mention that bill would never have occurred without the strength and character he demonstrated, helping to bring it forth. It was a tough time. We had to battle many forces. But in the end, this childcare bill has done an awful lot of good for people in this country. I want to express my respect for my colleague and thank him for yielding.

Mr. DODD. I thank my colleague.

The whole goal, of course, of the underlying bill before us is to move families from welfare to work. That has been the goal of those who initiated this proposal some time ago. Of course, many of us ask the question how in good conscience we could do that, turn our backs on those who are doing what we asked them to do, and that is to leave the dependency of welfare and to enter the workforce. Yet without the adoption of the Snowe-Dodd amendment, it is quite clear some 450,000 to 500,000 children who are presently receiving childcare assistance would have to be dropped from receiving childcare assistance. I don't think any of us want to be a party to that at all.

Let me further point this out to my colleagues as a backdrop of why the Snowe-Dodd amendment is so critically important. Between 1994 up to 2001, we have seen employment by families headed by single mothers soar from 61 percent to now about 75 percent of single parents with children who are in the workforce. Among low-income mothers with children under the age 6, who have the greatest childcare costs and needs, employment has risen from 44 percent in 1996 to about 60 percent in the year 2000.

Let me further point out there are 7 million children every day who go home from school alone, without any kind of afterschool or childcare assistance. These are children aged, some of them, between 6 and 7 years of age.

I don't have to say much more to make the case about the importance of doing what we can here to see to it we have the necessary childcare assistance that working families, poor working families are going to need.

What is presently occurring across the country is States cannot pick up the slack in the current bill. In the year 2003 alone, facing the worst State economies since World War II, 16 States have reduced eligibility levels so that fewer children will qualify for assistance. About 600,000 children in 24 States were put on waiting lists. Nearly every State made other changes in their childcare programs, such as reducing subsidies, increasing parent copays, cutting or eliminating afterschool programs, or shutting off assistance to families not on welfare—working poor families. States even made cuts in childcare quality investments such as reducing safety inspections.

In my own State of Connecticut, last week the State legislature recommended cutting another $20 million for the States Care4Kids childcare program. I say another $20 million because this is the most recent cut enacted in my State. The program will have gone from $121.5 million in fiscal year 2002 down to $70 million for next year.

In the meantime, of course, costs for childcare have continued to rise. Although the economy seems to be improving, not just Connecticut, but many States continue to face very tough budget decisions.

On this chart, every one of these little figures represents 2,000 children on a wait list across the country. I will not go through the entire list, but just to get some idea of what I am talking about, in Alabama, 16,700; Arizona, 8,000; California, 280,000; Florida 48,800; here in the District of Columbia, 1,400. In my State of Connecticut, 15,000 children are on wait lists; in Georgia, 30,000. It goes on. These are 24 States that keep lists. Other States don't keep waiting lists at all because frankly they don't want to know the numbers, and I don't blame them, because they are struggling across the country with the numbers of children who are qualified and would be eligible for childcare assistance but can't get it. These are

the children on the wait list who presently need it.

Imagine, if you are not a parent of a young child yourself, colleagues, you may have children who are parents. Ask them, ask people in your office, what it is like today if you are going to work, you have a young child, and you are asked to pay $4,000 to $6,000 to $8,000 to $10,000 a year for childcare assistance.

Our staffs are pretty well taken care of. We have childcare centers for Senate employees. We have childcare centers around Capitol Hill and other places. But if you are a working parent holding down a job and you don't have those kinds of incomes and revenues, you have some idea of what it must be. Data from the Child Care Bureau shows 21 percent of childcare recipients receive TANF funds. This means nearly 80 percent of childcare funds are used to help working poor families. If childcare funds are not increased, the working poor will be cast aside so States have sufficient funds to help the welfare poor.

We ought not rob Peter to pay Paul. Both need our help—those on welfare moving to work and those who have moved from welfare to work but are just barely hanging on. If we deprive them of this additional assistance they fall right back. What good is that, in the welfare reform bill, where our underlying goal is to move people from welfare to work, not only temporarily but permanently, if we can?

The level of funding in the Finance Committee bill which provides an increase of $200 million a year, in our view—Senator SNOWE and myself and others who are cosponsoring this amendment—is woefully insufficient. The Congressional Budget Office estimates it would cost about $1.5 billion in additional childcare money to meet the work requirements under the Senate welfare bill. But that is not the full story.

The Congressional Budget Office also estimates even if there were no increase in the work requirements in this bill—of course, there are additional work requirements—it would cost an additional $4.5 billion over the next 5 years to maintain assistance for the 2 million children who currently receive help for childcare. A subsidy provided for the family today would simply not cover the cost 5 years from now. Again, you don't have to have a Ph.D. in economics to understand that.

To do otherwise is to shift costs to States or the parents, neither of whom are in a position to pick up the slack for the Federal Government.

Let me put this chart up as well. It will give you some sense of what I am talking about. You may not be able to see this very clearly. Every single one of the X's in every one of these States all across the country indicates the State has cut back in one way or another in terms of childcare assistance.

As I mentioned earlier, 24 States have a waiting list for childcare. Other States do not have a waiting list—not because they do not need assistance, but because they do not want to keep those waiting lists.

It is good news that welfare caseloads are down, although I understand the caseloads in a number of States have actually gone up. A reduced caseload does not mean a reduction in the need for childcare for low-income working families. What we know from studies about families leaving welfare is they are leaving welfare for low-wage jobs. They have left the ranks of the welfare poor to join the ranks of the working poor. Their need for childcare assistance has not changed. In fact, it may have gone up. Many State administrators believe the availability of childcare is one of the chief reasons welfare caseloads have declined.

Nevertheless, the purpose of childcare funding is to assist low-income families regardless of whether they receive welfare. Childcare can easily cost between $4,000 and $10,000 a year for one child, more than the cost of public college tuition in nearly every State. Therefore, the fact that welfare rolls have been declining is irrelevant to whether families need childcare assistance.

Nearly one-quarter of the TANF funds used to support childcare assistance is either transferred from TANF to childcare or spent directly on childcare. But estimates show that States are expected to spend a declining percentage of TANF funds on childcare as work requirements increase and TANF reserve funds from early years of the program are exhausted. In fact, most States, including my own of Connecticut, have exhausted their TANF reserve funds, or have nearly exhausted them.

States simply are not awash in TANF money. If they were, they would not be slashing childcare funding. Yet nearly every State has made cuts in childcare assistance. Let us be very clear. The promise made in 1996 when four separate childcare programs were consolidated as part of welfare reform was this would be a simpler program to administer, and childcare assistance would no longer be tied to welfare. Childcare assistance would be available for low-wage families regardless of welfare receipt. Now it appears that lacking sufficient funds, States such as my own are shutting off assistance to the working poor.

My colleagues are telling these families: Work your way off welfare, but once you are off, that is it. They are among the working poor. They are no longer a concern to many of my colleagues here. I disagree.

I thank Senator GRASSLEY and Senator BAUCUS, the chair and ranking Democrat of this committee, along with Senator HATCH and others for understanding this basic concept. Working poor families need this help or they will fall back into a dependency role.

If we do not adopt this amendment, as I mentioned, some 450,000 kids of the 2 million presently being served could lose childcare assistance.

I mentioned as well how single working mothers and their employment force has actually gone up to 75 percent and the poorest families actually have gone up almost 20 percent in the last 4 or 5 years. These mothers need childcare assistance. They don't have alternatives. They are single parents. They do not live necessarily in the old neighborhoods where there was someone next door or down the block or on the neighboring farm who would take care of them. They need this kind of help.

I know my time has expired. Let me say this is not only my view. There is a list of organizations which I ask unanimous consent to be printed in the RECORD, beginning with the National Governors Association, all of whom, regardless of political persuasion or ideology, urge support for our amendment. They understand these families need our support. I ask unanimous consent that the list be printed in the RECORD, along with letters of endorsement.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SNOWE-DODD AMENDMENT GROUPS SUPPORTING $6 BILLION FOR CHILD CARE

National Governors Association, American Public Human Services Association, National Conference of State Legislatures, National AfterSchool Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, Easter Seals, National Women's Law Center, Children's Defense Fund, Generations United, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Center for Law and Social Policy, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, National Collaboration for Youth, I Am Your Child Foundation.

Girls Incorporated, National Crime Prevention Council, National Institute for Out-of-School Time, United Way of America, YWCA, Campfires USA, AED Center for Youth Development and Policy, Adapted Physical Activity Council, Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

American Association on Mental Retardation, American Dance Therapy Association, American Foundation of the Blind, American Music Therapy Association, American Occupation Therapy Association, Association for Maternal and Child Health Programs, Association of University Centers on Disabilities.

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, Council of Parent Advocates and Attorneys, Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children, Epilepsy Foundation, Federal of Families for Children's Mental Health, Helen Keller National Center, IDEA Infant and Toddler Coordinators Association, International Dyslexia Association.

Learning Disabilities Association of America, National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems, National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of Social Workers, National Coalition on Deaf-Blindness, National Consortium for Physical Education and Recreation for Individuals with Disabilities, Research Institute for Independent Living.

School Social Workers Association of America, Spina Bifida Association of America, TASH, The Arc of the United States,

United Cerebral Palsy, USAction, US Action Education Fund, Volunteers of America, Youth Service America, 4 Counties for Kids (IL), Akron After-School (OH).

Arizona School-Age Coalition, Arizona State University, California School Age Coalition, Campfire USA First Texas Council, Circle ''C'' Ranch Academy (Tampa, FL), Columbia Heights Youth Club, Connecticut After-School Alliance, Connecticut School-Age Care Alliance, Flood Brook Community Collaborative (S. Londonderry, VT), Florida School-Age Child Care Coalition, Georgia School-Age Care Association, Heads Up (DC).

Illinois School-Age Care Network, Nebraska School-Age Care Alliance, Newport Enrichment Team (Newport, NH), New York State School-Age Care Coalition, North Shore Community College School-Age Child Care Certificate Program (MA), R'Club Child Care, Inc. (St. Petersburg, FL), Safe Harbor After-School (Michigan City, IN), Safe Haven After-School Program (Fresno, CA).

Southwest Community Network, Texas Afterschool Association, Texas Afterschool Network, The After-School Corporation (NY), United People Who Care Organization, Inc. (AZ), University Outreach Services, Shawnee State University (OR).

Utah School Age Care Alliance, Yuma School District #1, Discovery Clubs (AZ), Wings Afterschool Program (Whitingham, VT), Results, Inc., Voices for Utah Children, Voices for Children of San Antonio, Pennsylvania Partnership for Children, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, Senator SNOWE, cosponsors of this amendment, and myself, believe the amendment deserves support. We urge adoption of it.

I thank my colleagues for listening.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I am going to vote yes on the amendment of the Senator from Maine. There are several reasons.

I have already stated yesterday in remarks that I believe the next phase of welfare reform must focus on strengthening work and opportunities for people to move from welfare to work. Of course, work is the key to self-sufficiency. Hence, this bill; this bill strengthens work. It would increase the participation rate requirement for States as well as increase the standard hours for individuals.

The typical welfare adult case is usually a single mother with a young child, many of whom lack even a high school degree. These are women who work more often than not. These women more often than not have families in crisis. They can't find a way to make their lives work. They need help.

If we are asking these women to go to work and to move from part-time to full-time work, if that is the case for some, childcare is an integral part of ensuring they can successfully meet the challenge required by law—a challenge that is good for society. Moving people out of welfare into the world of work is the only way they can move up the economic ladder. A life of welfare is a life of poverty.

Lack of good, affordable childcare is often a barrier to succeeding in the workplace. I am committed to doing everything I can to help these families succeed in work. That is good for the taxpayer as well as for the families. I have come to the conclusion that increasing funding for childcare is a key to accomplishing that goal.

As we know, States are facing budget deficits and childcare funding in those States has been frozen. Certainly in the context of a debate over welfare reform and progress, we should be mindful that States have spent resources to provide childcare to families attempting a transition from welfare to work.

I believe in the context of the debate over welfare reform we should consider whether it is important that we provide a level of funding sufficient so States can maintain the childcare supporting services they have been providing to welfare recipients and low-income families. I have concluded it is important to continue those services. I recognize in order to do that, we need to provide additional resources in the specific area of childcare.

If we were merely to increase childcare funding at a rate to keep up with inflation on the current level of spending, we would increase it by about $1.5 billion. If we include the $1 billion already in the bill before the Senate as it was reported out of committee and adjust that for inflation as well as including what the Congressional Budget Office estimates are the childcare costs associated with increasing the work requirement, we are close to $3.3 billion in additional childcare costs. This is what we know. We know we need at least $3.3 billion to meet the challenge of childcare. Now we have heard we need anywhere from $4 billion to $5 billion for States to continue providing services related to childcare.

I don't think we know for sure the exact increase of childcare funding we need to maintain the current level of services. However, I do think we need to assume there is a need, and an increasing need.

I do not believe $6 billion over 5 years is an unreasonable increase in childcare funding, given the increase in the work requirements, the current State budget situation, and the importance of maintaining at the very least the current level of childcare support available to low-income families.

Therefore, I will vote for the Snowe amendment. I ask my colleagues to do likewise.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I want to say how gratified I am to hear Senator GRASSLEY. I was very much encouraged to hear the comments of Senator HATCH.

As I see, we have been joined on the floor by Senator SNOWE of Maine, the author of this amendment, and by Senator DODD, who spoke just a few minutes ago.

I want to express to them my heartfelt thanks for their leadership in bringing this issue before us, and for working to build consensus around this amendment.

I strongly support this. In explaining that support, I go a long way back in time, back to 1936. In 1936, we did not have a welfare program at the Federal level in this country. In 1936, we adopted something after the encouragement of FDR that largely provided cash assistance to widows with children. Over the years, from 1936 through World War II and into the 1980s and 1990s, welfare changed.

By 1996, when welfare reform was adopted, widows and children were eligible for cash assistance on AFDC, Aid to Families with Dependent Children. A lot of the people receiving AFDC had children. For the most part, they were not widows. For the most part, they had never been married.

Despite the best of intentions, what we created after 1936 was a program that encouraged many women to have children, oftentimes at a young age; encouraged men to impregnate them; and encouraged the men to walk away from the children they helped to create as if they had nothing to do with it.

That is not to say welfare as we knew it did not do a lot of good. It did. But it also caught a lot of people in quicksand from which they found it difficult to escape.

Members may recall the debate back in the 1990s. Bill Clinton, when he ran for President, said we need to change welfare as we know it. One of the reasons is, in the early 1990s, a lot of people were better off on welfare than they were working.

For the folks who went to work, who got off of welfare, here is what they gained: They gained the right to pay taxes, State income taxes, Federal income taxes, Social Security taxes.

Here is what they lost: They may lose their health care, their Medicaid health care; they may lose food stamp eligibility; they may lose assisted housing; they have to figure out how to pay for transportation to get to a job; and they will have to figure out how to pay for childcare.

That all changed effectively in 1996. A lot of Governors were involved, including some who serve here today: Governors VOINOVICH, ALLEN, myself, and EVAN BAYH of Indiana worked with a whole lot of other Governors, including John Engler of Michigan, to provide unanimity on the part of the States and the National Governors Association, who said we have to change this system. People ought to be better off when they go to work than when they are on welfare.

When we created the block grant approach, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, we said States have some flexibility in using that money that is allocated to them. They can use it for cash assistance, they can use it for childcare, they can use it for transportation assistance, they can use it for medical assistance, as well. Interestingly enough, as the welfare rolls

dropped—and they are down by half—the amount of money spent out of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Family fund is now less than half of that which is spent. We spend a lot more money collectively on childcare, transportation assistance, and medical assistance. Not everyone who is off welfare is better off, but a whole lot of people are.

Fast forward today to 2004, 8 years after the adoption of the welfare reform. We heard Senator DODD go through the numbers and explain why we need to provide this additional money. Let me reiterate a couple of points. Almost half the States have a waiting list today for families who are eligible under the criteria of those States. They are eligible for childcare assistance. But the States cannot provide it.

California has over a quarter of a million people on the waiting list. In Virginia, there are 7,000. Again, they are eligible under the State's definition, the State's requirement for childcare, but the States cannot make good on it.

Last year, the States had a collective shortfall in their budgets of about $80 billion. It is not a whole lot better this year. It will not be a whole lot better next year.

Along the way, the States have been changing their criteria for eligibility. A couple of examples include Ohio, Nebraska, and Kentucky. Now if you make more than $23,000 and you have a family of three people, you are not eligible for childcare anymore. If you make more than $19,100 in Indiana, you are not eligible for childcare assistance if you have a family of three. In Nebraska, if you make more than $18,800 and you are a family of three, you are no longer eligible for childcare.

From my own experience as Governor of my State, there are four things needed in order to help people move off of welfare, and to stay off of welfare. One is a job. Second is a way to get to the job. Third is help with health care, children's care and their own. Last is help with childcare. If you do not have those four things—a job, a way to get to the job, help with health care, and childcare—people will not make a transition to work and remain working.

My friends, there are still some provisions in this bill over which we will probably have differences. This is one over which there should be no difference. This is a point on which Democrats and Republicans ought to agree. I am encouraged. We have a great opportunity for consensus on this bill. A big part of reaching a consensus enables us to pass this legislation, and to agree on this amendment. If we do, my hope is we can work out some of the more difficult amendments and get to a position where we can vote on final passage today.

Remember the old saying: If it ain't broke, don't fix it. On welfare reform, a lot of skeptics in 1996 said this will not work; we will throw people to the lions, and we will make things worse. For the most part, those fears have been unfounded. For the most part, people are better off. In million of homes today, someone is waking up and going to work. Their children have seen them go to work. If we provide good childcare for their children, we reverse the likelihood their children will end up in a welfare situation.

CHRIS DODD knows this better than I do. For a child who has good reading skills, the parents have read to them. They had quality prekindergarten training. When they go into first grade they have a 15,000-word surplus compared to those kids who have not had those things. Those kids will walk into the first grade with a 15,000-word or more word deficit.

We learn, as human beings, about half of what we will learn by the time we are 6. To the extent that we have kids who are in the home of somebody who is trying to hold things together, working minimum-wage jobs, they are not getting the kind of nurturing, whether at home or through a quality pre-K program, we raise the likelihood they themselves will end up entering school behind, falling further behind, and we raise the prospect, the likelihood they, too, will end up in a life of dependency.

It does not have to happen. I am very much encouraged if we pass this legislation today a lot of childcare providers will have the money they need to provide quality care. A lot of families ending up on the waiting lists will find the waiting lists reduced, and a lot of children who do not have a successful time of it when they get to kindergarten and first grade will have a better time of it.

Mr. DODD. I thank my Senator for his statement in support. As a former Governor, of course, he understands these issues from a State perspective, as well as cutbacks.

I am particularly grateful for the mention of the gap that exists between the poorest children in this country and those who come from the more affluent families. The slight correction I make—even his number is startling—but the average middle class child is exposed to about 500,000 words by kindergarten; an economically disadvantaged child is exposed to half as many, at best.

To put it in perspective. In a childcare setting where children, in the absence of parents who are working, can actually be in a place where they can learn, you may not close that gap entirely, but the gap of more than 100,000 words between those two children ought to startle every single American.

I thank my colleague for raising that issue.

Mr. CARPER. Whether the deficit is 100,000 or 15,000 words, it is too much.

The good news is this: We can do something about it. We can do something about it today. We can do something about it in 25 minutes when we vote on the Snowe-Dodd amendment. That is what we need to do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, unless the Senator from Alabama wishes to proceed, I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. KOHL.

Mr. SESSIONS. That will be fine. The Senator from Wisconsin was here before I was.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Wisconsin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Montana.

Mr. President, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by Senators SNOWE and DODD to provide an additional $6 billion in childcare funding. The amendment is essential to guaranteeing the safety and health of the children of working families, and if it fails I cannot support the underlying bill.

I say that as a strong supporter of positive welfare reform. Wisconsin led the Nation in developing programs to move families off welfare and into employment long before Congress enacted the 1996 welfare reform bill, for which I voted. But the great success Wisconsin has seen would not have been possible without the vital work supports offered to welfare families—families that could not have become self-sufficient without help with childcare, health care, and food stamps.

Across our country, wherever you find stable and safe childcare available and affordable, you see parents moving off the welfare rolls and into jobs. Unfortunately, quality childcare is out of reach for too many working families today.

According to recent data, the average fee in Wisconsin for full-time care can surpass $7,000 a year—a small fortune to a single parent working at or near minimum wage. The Snowe-Dodd amendment, combined with the funding in the underlying bill, would send an additional $124 million in childcare funding to Wisconsin to help those working parents afford the care their children deserve. That translates into thousands more parents able to work, and thousands more children able to spend their days in a healthy, safe environment. The story is the same in all 50 States.

With the addition of the Snowe-Dodd amendment, the Senate can be proud of a welfare bill that lives up to its name—a bill that truly works for the welfare of struggling parents and, more importantly, their children. The Snowe-Dodd amendment builds on the childcare funding already in the bill as well as other important provisions to make sure working families receive the support they need and deserve.

One such provision, sponsored by Senator SNOWE and myself, would free child support payments from State and Federal red tape and send it straight to

the children for whom it is intended. Under current law, Federal and State governments can hold onto childcare payments in order to offset welfare expenses. Our provision gives State options and incentives to deliver child support directly to families. Wisconsin has been doing this since 1997, with great results. Fathers are more apt to pay—and pay more—when they know their children are on the receiving end instead of the Government. And there are no added costs to States, as families that receive child support have more of their own income and are less likely to need other public assistance.

Childcare funding and child support are two simple steps towards ensuring families a smoother path towards self-sufficiency—and that is what a reformed, a compassionate, and an effective welfare system is supposed to be about. With the addition of the Snowe-Dodd amendment, the Senate's welfare bill will go a long way toward creating such a system.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the House welfare bill. The draconian penalties it includes would do little to help families move off of welfare and into employment. In addition, the House bill does away with protections for mothers with children under 6—a disturbing policy decision with long-run implications for the future of the infants and toddlers it targets.

I urge my colleagues who take this bill to conference to reject the approach taken by the House. Families struggling to make a decent living for their children need a hand up—not a slap down. There is no sense in punishing parents and children for being poor. I also urge the Senate to overwhelmingly accept the Snowe-Dodd amendment today—and say yes to a healthy future for our Nation's most unfortunate children.

Mr. President, I thank Senator DODD and Senator BAUCUS and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I yield myself 6 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I am inclined to want to say: Here we go again. We have a good bill, founded on, and built upon, a welfare reform bill that passed a number of years ago that has had extraordinary success. We now have about half as many people in America on welfare as there were before.

I guess the average American would think we have saved money, but, of course, that is not so. The way we give money to the States, fundamentally, is they get the same amount of money, no matter how many people are on the rolls, and they get to focus that money more on the people who are on welfare. And we have not saved money.

In addition, we have come up with a new welfare reform bill that I believe does a lot of good things. It will encourage work. It will encourage family formation. It will encourage stable family units and be positive in a number of different ways. So I think it is a good bill.

But even though the number of people on welfare is down, even though that number has continued to drop during the times of economic activity that we have seen in the recent past, we are not saving any money.

The bill itself, the fundamental bill, has a $1 billion increase in funding. And now, on top of that, we have a $6 billion childcare program added on top.

Now, having served on the Budget Committee, as I know the Presiding Officer has, we wrestled hard with these numbers. We wrestled hard with these numbers, and we criticized ourselves, and we told ourselves—over and over again—we have to start restraining what we do in terms of spending.

We have had people on the other side complain mightily about budget deficits over and over again. Oh, they are concerned about our budget deficits. But when we have a bill to add a huge new spending program to a welfare bill that, truthfully, ought to come in flat, at least, if not reducing the amount of welfare—since we have half as many people on welfare as we used to have—we now tack on to that $1 billion fundamental welfare reform a $6 billion childcare reform.

To my knowledge—I am on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee—we have not discussed childcare in our committee. I do not believe there has been any formal or thorough hearings in the Finance Committee. Just boom, right on top of this bill, $6 billion. Sock it to the taxpayer.

Oh, they say it is going to be paid for by Customs user fees. Every bill that comes through here that is unfunded they say it is going to be paid for by Customs user fees. Surely, we will have some revenue come out of Customs user fees, but it is just revenue, just money that is coming into our Government when we are in a time of substantial deficit.

So we are going to spend that, not to fund programs we have out there now that need it, but we are going to spend that new money, they tell us, in this bill on an entirely new childcare program.

Let me show this chart. This chart gives an indication that this Congress has not been insensitive to childcare in America. And let me say this, something we do not think about: We have fought in this Congress, and we need to reauthorize this year, the child tax credit, which provides $1,000 per year for every child in America so families can use that money for childcare or anything else they need—$1,000 per child. For a three-child family, $3,000. They have that money they can utilize as they choose.

Not only that, we are reducing the marriage penalty. When people get married, they pay more taxes. Not only that, we have reduced the 15-percent bracket, or expanded the 10-percent bracket, so that more people will be paying income tax rates at 10 percent rather than 15 percent. It is a substantial reduction for them, a one-third reduction in the amount of income tax lower income working Americans will be paying.

Those are good things we have done without any bureaucracy or anything of that nature.

Look at this chart. This shows the various childcare programs we have in America. Total childcare spending, Federal and State—about $6 billion of it is State—$23 billion per year. Now, I am telling you, that is a major commitment by this Congress and the American people to deal with childcare.

But there is a limit to what we do here. We have reduced people on welfare by 50 percent. Are we saving any money for the taxpayers? No. We are adding a $1 billion increase in this bill to help that remaining 50 percent to be positive contributors, to have education and training and jobs and other assets and childcare.

As a matter of fact, this welfare reform bill will unlock $2 billion that is sitting out there right now. This $2 billion, because of the regulations, is not being able to be utilized. That $2 billion, when it is unlocked, will be available for childcare or whatever the State managers of these programs deem to use it for.

I wish we had the money to fund everybody who wanted to have childcare, to just let them have it. I wish we had the money. I wish we had the money to do a lot of things around here, but we are in a period of deficit. We need to maintain integrity in spending.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used his time.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I yield myself such time as I consume.

Clearly, to make welfare work, there has to be adequate childcare support. It is a no-brainer. I appreciate Senator GRASSLEY's efforts to help improve this bill. I appreciate, therefore, even more the amendment offered by the Senators from Connecticut and Maine to provide for adequate childcare funding. I further appreciate the support of this amendment by the chairman of the committee, Senator GRASSLEY. It is another example of his doing what is right. There are a lot of politics around here. Clearly, what is right is to make sure our kids get enough childcare support.

There are 2 million children today who currently benefit from Federal childcare. Maintaining that current level will take $4.5 billion over the next 5 years. We also need another $1.5 billion just to cover the cost of the new work requirements in the Senate bill. In total, we need $5 billion more than this bill requires. Therefore, the

amendment pending is one that must be passed.

In Montana, more than 10,000 children receive childcare assistance, but that is only one-tenth of the number of children who are eligible for childcare assistance. I believe with passage of this amendment, we will be able to raise that one-tenth to a much higher level.

I remember when I walked across the State of Montana, I met a lady who must have been 19, 20 years old, near Bozeman. She told me she was trying her level best, emphatically, to stay off welfare. She was a single mom. She had one child. She had a very low-paying job. She was a very adroit woman. She looked like she had a lot on the ball. But she was determined to stay off welfare. She slept on her parents' sofa so she didn't have to pay for a room, and someone else took care of her child during part of the day. But then she figured out that her childcare cost her 30 to 40 percent of her total wages. She couldn't do it. She was so upset that she had to go back on welfare. Why? Because the wages she was receiving were not enough and her childcare was costing way too much.

Based upon that one example alone, I personally know how valuable this is. Childcare is critical to help keep people off of welfare, to help keep people working. It is an investment in our future. Who knows, some of these children might be future Nobel Prize winners, future inventors or poets or authors. These are our kids. It is a no-brainer for passage of the amendment. I urge a very large vote.

How much time remains on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Three minutes 15 seconds.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I yield 2 minutes to the Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for yielding me the time.

I strongly support this amendment and believe it is an essential part of any TANF reauthorization. If we were to defeat this amendment, we would probably have to conclude that we are better off under current law than under the bill that has been reported out of the Finance Committee. Many of my colleagues believe we should have done more for childcare in the legislation we were considering in the Finance Committee, but it was determined at that time that our best opportunity to get the support we needed was to follow the lead of the two sponsors of this amendment, Senator SNOWE, in particular, in the committee and Senator DODD here on the floor, to be sure that this legislation got enacted.

The truth is, the underlying bill imposes greater work requirements on low-income mothers and puts them in an impossible situation if we don't continue to provide the childcare assistance they need. It is also clear that if we take the level of funding of childcare that is provided for in the bill without this amendment, we will see childcare assistance denied to hundreds of thousands of working poor families.

This is essential legislation. I strongly support it. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment. With this amendment, we can move ahead with consideration of other amendments and hopefully wind up with reauthorized TANF legislation that we can all support.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I yield myself the remaining time and ask unanimous consent to add the following Senators as cosponsors of the amendment: Senators DAYTON, DEWINE, CORZINE, and HARKIN.

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

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise to make a few comments regarding this amendment before the final vote.

First, I thank Chairman GRASSLEY for his extraordinary leadership and his commitment to ensuring that this legislation gets completed this year, as should be done given all the temporary extensions, but also for his support of the pending amendment to increase childcare support by more than $6 billion.

I also thank Senator DODD, who has provided exemplary advocacy and leadership on behalf of families and children. I appreciate his reaching across the political aisle to forge and craft this bipartisan amendment, along with Senator CARPER, who approached me some time ago as well, because of his leadership previously as Governor and now in the Senate on the importance and value of providing the necessary child support in order to make sure we improve the well-being and quality of life for families and children as we transition off this entire welfare system. And I thank other cosponsors such as Senator BINGAMAN and all of the Senators who have chosen to cosponsor this amendment across the political aisle. I truly appreciate it. It will give breadth and depth to the reauthorization of this welfare reauthorization.

This amendment is a recognition of reality. If we want the nearly 5 million people who currently are on the caseload to transition and remain off welfare, we clearly have to provide them affordable, quality childcare assistance. In fact, one of the major pillars in the 1996 landmark legislation was to ensure that we create the necessary support systems so that full-time employment would become accessible.

We created the childcare development block grant for families who are on welfare, those transitioning off welfare, low-income families who are not on welfare for whom this assistance could make all the difference. Yet today only one in seven children—only 15 percent—in America who are eligible for Federal support are actually receiving it.

More significantly, in 2003, every State in America has reduced their childcare support because of the tremendous financial constraints they are confronting. Not only that, there are 16 States that are reducing the eligibility levels. Therefore, fewer children will be eligible for childcare assistance.

There can be no question about the impact of the value of childcare in America. According to a 2002 study, 82 percent of former welfare recipients who receive childcare assistance are more likely than those who do not to have employment for 2 years after being off welfare. That is critically important because it underscores the value of providing this type of support.

Currently there are 2 million children receiving a childcare subsidy, which is only a fraction of those children who are eligible. CBO estimates that it will require $4.5 billion to ensure all 2 million children receive the current level of support over the next 5 years. Yet the underlying bill only includes $1 billion that will cover approximately the increased cost to childcare as a result of the expanded work requirements. So if we do nothing more than the underlying bill, there is the potential of 400,000 children who will lose childcare support if we do not pass this amendment today.

Now, some people say, you know, we are doing enough. Well, you ask the 605,000 children in America who are on waiting lists. There are not waiting lists in every State. Some States don't keep waiting lists, and the reason is because they know they cannot fulfill the burgeoning demand for childcare and will create expectations they cannot fulfill.

This amendment becomes critically important to the well-being of families and children. It is a recognition of reality. The reality is, if we want families to leave welfare, stay off welfare, then let's give them the support they need by passing this amendment. The reality is that children need the quality daycare while their parents are working to improve themselves and their families. We don't want to create untenable situations that require families to make untenable choices.

I urge adoption of this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana is recognized.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I yield the remainder of our time to the Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, very quickly, I thank the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee for their leadership on this issue. Once again, I am deeply pleased to be joining Senator SNOWE. She has worked tirelessly on behalf of children and the issue of childcare during our joint service in the Senate. I also thank Senator HATCH and others. I go back a long way with Senator HATCH. It was almost 15 years ago, in 1990, when we passed the first Childcare and Development Block Grant, CCDBG.

In 1996, we consolidated 4 separate childcare programs and included them in the welfare reform package. I have a

couple of quick points to make. Federal funds presently have been frozen for 3 years on childcare. The costs are obviously going up. Senator SNOWE pointed out we have 400,000 to 450,000 children who will be dropped from child care assistance if this amendment is not included. At least 600,000 children are on waiting lists in the 24 States that keep them. For the remaining States, obviously, there are many eligible children not receiving child care help.

The Governors want this. They have been asking for it. They are cutting back themselves. Every State has cut back in one way or another on childcare assistance programs. Seven million children every day go home from school to an empty house, with no kind of afterschool program and care. I don't think any of us want to see that perpetuated.

This amendment is paid for by extending Customs user fees which are scheduled to expire. We are not asking anyone to add to the deficit at all. This is an existing program. There is nothing new about it. It was crafted 15 years ago and part of a consolidation of child care programs in 1996, so it is not a new program. The amendment is paid for and it is absolutely critical.

The underlying bill says, let's get people off of welfare and to work. We have expanded some of the work requirements here. You must have additional childcare support, or working poor families will slip back into dependency. No Member wants to be part of a solution that would require that to happen with too many families out there making a tremendous effort to stay employed and independent.

Senator SNOWE and I graciously ask for your continuing support of this very important program. We urge adoption of this amendment.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today in support of this amendment to increase the amount of mandatory childcare funding available to States.

Many of us understand that child care is an essential part of encouraging people to work. I have long believed that parents who are concerned about their children's well-being cannot be effective, dependable employees. Unfortunately, the data are clear; the need for affordable child care in this country is rapidly increasing and the Federal funds available to help poor families have deteriorated significantly due to flat funding and inflation. Without dramatic funding increases, over 600,000 poor parents will face tough decisions about what to do with their children while they are working to keep the family out of poverty. I am concerned about this statistic.

I sincerely believe it is the right thing to do to require families receiving Federal assistance to work more hours to ensure they can become self-sufficient. That is one of the many reasons I am supportive of this bill, H.R. 4. However, requiring more hours of work from poor parents inevitably leads to an even greater demand in childcare funding because parents must be out of the home for longer periods of time. In many respects this is a healthy development for the family. But the $1 billion increase in childcare funding provided by this bill is simply not adequate to meet this increased work requirement; therefore, I think we need to go a step further. That is why I support this important amendment to increase child care funding by $6 billion over the next 5 years.

I would like to make it clear that I certainly understand the budget shortfalls this country is facing. While I believe much good can be done by increasing child care funding, I would not be supportive of this amendment if it were not 100 percent deficit neutral. I am pleased to see this amendment is offset by increases in customs user fees and does not add to the budget shortfalls we are currently experiencing. High deficits and the mountain of Federal debt represent real obligations that hurt our economic security, both now and in the future. Therefore, as long as we have a viable offset for childcare funding increases, I am supportive.

With that understanding, I encourage my Senate colleagues to support this amendment and provide these necessary childcare funds to families.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I add my strong support for the Snowe/Dodd amendment to add $6 billion in childcare funding in the TANF bill. This will allow for urgently needed improvements to access and the quality of childcare.

Back in 1996, Congress passed a tough welfare reform bill that demanded personal responsibility. I supported that bill. It said that if you are on welfare and you can work, you must work. Our reform has had some substantial successes, but now is not the time for a victory lap. I am particularly concerned that this bill does not provide adequate funding to address what we all know is one of the major barriers to employment—childcare.

If we are going to demand personal responsibility from every American, I believe the Government has a responsibility to every American.

If we are going to help struggling low-income families and those trying to leave welfare over the long term, we have a responsibility to provide those families with access to affordable, high quality childcare. Nationwide only one in eight kids eligible for childcare assistance actually receives it. In Iowa the story is worse, only 1 out of 12 actually receives assistance. Parents cannot work if they cannot afford decent childcare. But the sad reality is that many are forced, too often, to leave their kids in substandard care—or no care at all.

In Iowa nearly two-thirds of mothers with kids under age six are in the workforce. That is the second highest in the Nation. This means that children in Iowa spend a large percentage of their formative years in childcare. Unfortunately the availability of quality daycare has not kept pace with the demand of daycare. I have heard countless stories of families who tell me they had to leave their kids in substandard care because they could not find quality care or because they could not afford better care. One woman told me that she knew her kids were in front of the TV most of the day, but that was the only option she had. She had to go to work. These stories are just devastating.

Even when a family can find childcare, it is often too expensive. Low-income working families often spend almost 50 percent of their paychecks on childcare. Meanwhile, higher income families spent only 6 percent.

In my State of Iowa, the average cost of childcare in rural areas is almost $6,000 a year. And that is just for one child. The average wage of someone on TANF is only $7.28. So if we do the math, someone making slightly more than minimum wage working 40 hours a week is spending almost half of their earnings on childcare. One single mom struggling to get off welfare in Iowa told me that she spends 45 percent of her income to meet the childcare costs for her two children—and she has to work a second job at night so they can survive. Her total yearly childcare for two kids is $12,000.

And regardless of income, parents worry about the quality of childcare. In Iowa the majority of growth has been in nonregistered, unregulated care as opposed to registered and accredited centers. Nationwide there is also a major shortage of quality childcare for children in rural areas, for children with special needs, and for infants and toddlers. In fact, in a recent Midwest study, Iowa ranked the lowest in providing quality care for infants and toddlers. This is alarming, because the years through age three are a critical time for brain development and emotional development. This is when a child lays the foundation—or fails to lay the foundation—for later success in school and life.

Data from the National Academy of Sciences shows that the first 3 years of a child's life are the most important—80 percent of brain development occurs before the child's third birthday. Children who do not have rich, enjoyable, emotionally, and intellectually stimulating learning experiences during these important years can be stunted for life.

In fact, more than a dozen years ago, in 1991, the Committee for Economic Development, made up of business leaders, found that investing in quality childcare and other early interventions was critical to securing this Nation's economic future. CED urged Federal policy makers to view education as a process that begins at birth.

We also know that good childcare prevents later crime and violence. I request unanimous consent that this op-ed, written by the Des Moines chief of police, be included in the RECORD.

Chief McCarthy says that ''my law enforcement experience has taught me that by giving children the right start in life through programs such as pre-K and childcare, we can dramatically reduce the chances of you or someone you love becoming the victim of violence.''

Yet despite all that we know about how important good quality childcare is, we fail to support our highly skilled childcare providers. In fact, we are paying them less than bus drivers, barbers and janitors. I think it is time that changed. The average childcare worker's salary in Iowa is $14,100, well below the national average. There is also a 50 percent turnover rate for childcare providers. This is particularly harmful as stable, consistent relationships are essential to healthy development.

Recognizing the inadequacy in quality as chairman of Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee of Appropriations, I began funding an additional $200 million in CCDBG to improve quality, with targeted funding directed to infant and toddler needs.

The Dodd/Snow amendment will bring us a step closer to the day when all young children have the opportunities and supports they need to embark on a lifetime of learning.

We talk a lot in this country about budget deficits, economic prosperity and how as a nation we have to prioritize. One of our priorities surely must be to strengthen families, encourage work, and provide decent childcare. I understand that many of my colleagues have concerns with the cost of this amendment. Well if we can find trillions of dollars for tax cuts, hundreds of billion of dollars for a prescription drug give-away to big pharmaceutical companies and HMOs, and tens of billions of dollars for a trip to Mars, then surely we can make key investments in programs like CCDBG. I urge my colleagues to strongly support the Snowe/Dodd amendment.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Snowe-Dodd amendment to increase funding for child care by $6 billion. We know that high-quality child care makes a real difference for children and their families. It allows parents to work, and at the same time it gives children a safe and productive place to learn.

Today the need for child care is growing, but government support is not. In fact, because of the slow economy and State budget problems, many States are cutting back on their support of child care. This is having an especially painful impact on low-income families—the very families that are helped the most by child care. These are also the same families that will need more help because of the work requirements in the underlying bill. That is why we need to pass this amendment.

The Snowe-Dodd amendment will increase funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant by $6 billion. Without this amendment, about 430,000 children will lose their child care assistance over the next 3 years. This amendment will make a real difference for families in every state. In my own home state of Washington, this amendment will mean nearly $140 million in increased child care funding for Washington families.

Over the years, I have fought on this floor to increase child care funding, so I don't need to spend a lot of time reviewing what the research shows us. We know that safe, quality child care helps children start school ready to learn and keeps children safe while their parents work. Studies show that quality makes a real difference. Children in poor-quality child care have been found to lag behind in language and reading skills and to display more aggression. On the other hand, children in high-quality child care have greater math, thinking and attention skills. They also have fewer behavior problems than children in lower-quality care.

The benefits of high quality child care are not in question; the only question is how many families can afford it? Full-day child care easily costs from $4,000 to $10,000 a year. That is at least as much as college tuition at a public university, and it's more than many families can afford. For example, if both parents work full-time for minimum wage, they only make $21,400 a year. Child care would be one-quarter to one-half of their income. Clearly, they need help.

Today, nearly 16 million children under age 13—who are living in low-income families—are likely to need child care. But out of those 16 million, only one in seven low-income children receive the federal child care assistance for which they are eligible.

Even worse, the need for child care is increasing because of our high unemployment rate and because of the increased work requirements in the underlying bill. Many out-of-work parents are looking for jobs, and they need child care to be able to look for a job. If this amendment fails and the underlying bill passes, about 430,000 children will lose their child care assistance by fiscal year 2008. Without this amendment, fewer and fewer children will get the child care they need. Because of inflation alone, States will need $5 billion over the next 5 years just to keep serving the same number of children. And that assumes that TANF funds will be available and that State budgets won't be cut.

We already know that States are cutting back on child care funding because of their budget shortfalls. In 2000, States spent $3.8 billion in TANF funds for child care programs. By 2002, State spending had dropped to $3.5 billion. Many States have growing numbers of low-income families on waiting lists. Some States are turning low-income families away unless those families receive TANF, are moving out of TANF, or have other special circumstances. Other States have altered eligibility requirements so that only the very poor receive assistance. And some States have raised copayments. According to the General Accounting Office, 23 States have changed their child care policies since 2001 in ways that limit access for families, shutting the door on opportunities for parents to work.

My own State of Washington has lowered the eligibility standard for child care subsidies from 225 percent to 200 percent of poverty. Washington State also increased monthly co-payments for families. In 2000, 54,000 children in Washington received subsidized child care. By 2001, the number had dropped to 51,200. As I mentioned earlier, this amendment will mean nearly $140 million in increased child care funding for Washington families. That help is desperately needed.

Today we are considering a welfare reauthorization bill that is supposed to help struggling families become self-sufficient. I do not believe we can have a meaningful conversation about getting parents into jobs unless families have access to safe, quality child care. I urge my colleagues to support the Snowe-Dodd amendment to increase child care funding by $6 billion.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the bipartisan childcare amendment being offered today. This amendment would provide reasonable and necessary increases in funding to the Child Care Development Block Grant.

The underlying bill only provides increases of $200 million per year for 5 years for childcare. Unfortunately, this level of funding fails to support low-income families who are trying to become independent and self-sufficient. First, the underlying bill imposes more rigorous work requirements on TANF mothers without providing enough resources for essential childcare support. In addition, the level of funding in the underlying bill is so inadequate that it will result in the loss of childcare funding for hundreds of thousands of working poor families. The cost of quality childcare in this country can exceed $10,000 per year, thus rendering quality childcare out of reach for too many low-income working families.

I strongly support this amendment. This amendment would provide the necessary funds to support the work requirements of TANF recipients as well as the efforts of low-income working families—parents trying to stay off welfare. It would provide sufficient resources to, at the very least, maintain the number of childcare slots available to working families. And, it would provide families with opportunities for quality childcare.

The availability of childcare assistance through the Child Care Development Block Grant, CCDBG, played an essential role in the decline of welfare caseloads around the country throughout the 1990s. Both the Federal Government and the States dramatically increased spending for child care after passage of welfare reform in 1996. The

bulk of the increases, however, came from the Federal Government. By 2002, the Federal Government appropriated approximately $4.8 billion for childcare in both discretionary and mandatory spending. States also saw record declines in TANF caseloads, and thus were able to use the flexible TANF dollars for childcare assistance.

The number of employed single mothers dramatically increased from 6.4 million in 1996 to 7.3 million in 2001. And, employment rates among low-income mothers with young children increased from 44 percent in 1996 to 59 percent in 2000. The number of children receiving childcare services through CCDBG doubled during this period from 1 million to approximately 2 million children.

Further, research shows that the availability of childcare subsidies leads to more work, higher earnings, and a greater likelihood of remaining off welfare. A recent study found that single mothers with young children who receive childcare assistance are 40 percent more likely to still be employed after 2 years than mothers who do not receive such assistance. And, the numbers only increase for mothers who were former welfare recipients. According to the data, former welfare recipients with young children who receive childcare assistance are 82 percent more likely to remain employed after 2 years. The evidence shows that our childcare policies work; childcare assistance helps low-income working mothers move from welfare to work.

Our commitment to childcare, however, has waned. The Federal contribution to childcare has remained frozen since 2002. And as a result of severe budget crises facing our States, the state contribution to childcare has significantly diminished. The use of TANF dollars for childcare has declined since 2001. Moreover, states have had to close budget gaps cumulatively totaling $200 billion since FY 2001, and many States have cut assistance to childcare to close the budget gaps. According to the General Accounting Office, nearly one half of all States have made policy changes that reduce the availability of childcare subsidies, and 11 other States are proposing changes that will reduce current levels of spending on childcare.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, it will cost approximately $4.5 billion in Federal funding just to maintain the current number of childcare slots for the next 5 years. If this amendment fails, it is estimated that more than 400,000 children would lose their childcare assistance.

Although CCDBG serves approximately 2 million children nationwide, we are only providing childcare to 12 percent of the eligible population. Further, due to State cuts, we are already seeing States reducing eligibility, lowering income limits, increasing waiting lists, lowering provider reimbursement rates, and increasing parent copayments.

For example, 15 States and the District of Columbia have reduced their eligibility limits, either lowering the eligibility cutoff based on poverty or restricting eligibility to TANF-only families. New Mexico has lowered eligibility for childcare, making the income cutoff lower than it was in 2000. These policy changes, of course, do not mean that low-income families are any less in need of childcare. It just means that without the childcare subsidy, it will be that much harder to afford quality childcare.

In New Mexico, there are almost 100,000 children in low-income families with all parents in the workforce. A family of three earning more than $22,890 a year cannot qualify for childcare assistance in New Mexico, but at this income level they would be struggling just to cover their basic expenses. In Albuquerque, for example, annual costs for decent housing, $7,008; food, $4,212; transportation, $1,932; health care, $3,060; and other necessities such as telephone service, clothing, and household items, $3,480 alone would total $19,692, according to a study of basic family budgets. Paying for average-priced center care for an infant and a preschooler, $10,408, would put this family $7,210 over budget.

The cost of quality childcare is simply out of reach for too many working families. The quality of childcare has a significant effect on children's health and development and their readiness for school. Studies show that children who have traditionally been at risk of not doing well in school are affected more by the quality of care than other children. These children are more sensitive to the negative effects of poor childcare and receive greater benefits from higher quality care. Evidence demonstrates that children who attend higher quality childcare perform better on measures of cognitive development, such as math and language skills, as well as on behavioral development, such as thinking and attention, interactions with peers, and behavior skills. Yet, while low-income children are at greater risk, they are less likely to be able to access high-quality childcare.

Without adequate increases in funding for childcare, we are forcing our low-income mothers into impossible situations. This bill requires TANF recipients to work, yet fails to provide adequate childcare to support their efforts. The bill also fails to provide sufficient childcare funding to maintain childcare assistance for hundreds of thousands of working poor families. How can we expect low-income families to maintain independence and self-sufficiency, if we fail to provide them with the necessary supports—or worse, we take them away. For nearly 30 years, the evidence has been telling us that quality early care and education makes all the difference in the world in a child's readiness for school. Yet by failing to make quality childcare accessible to low-income families, we continue to wonder why all of our children are not academically successful. Without adequate funding for childcare, we continue to leave hundreds of thousands of children behind.

I urge my colleagues to support this vital amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Maine has the last minute and a half.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I thank, again, Senator DODD for his being a champion over the years on behalf of children and families, and for making it possible that we are in the position of offering this amendment. I also thank the cosponsors and Chairman GRASSLEY for honoring his promise that we have a priority position in offering this amendment.

Ultimately, this amendment will determine whether families on welfare and their children will be able to achieve self-sufficiency, which was the goal of the Welfare Reform Act in 1996. That was an unprecedented success. This amendment will help build upon that success and help families to achieve the economic independence they and their families deserve.

Mr. President, I urge adoption of this amendment and I yield back the remainder of our time.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, have the yeas and nays been requested?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have not.

Mr. DODD. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI) is necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) would vote ''yea.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 78, nays 20, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 64 Leg.]

YEAS—78

Akaka	Cochran	Graham (SC)
Alexander	Coleman	Grassley
Baucus	Collins	Hagel
Bayh	Conrad	Harkin
Bennett	Corzine	Hatch
Biden	Daschle	Hollings
Bingaman	Dayton	Hutchison
Bond	DeWine	Inouye
Boxer	Dodd	Jeffords
Breaux	Dole	Johnson
Brownback	Dorgan	Kennedy
Bunning	Durbin	Kohl
Byrd	Edwards	Landrieu
Campbell	Feingold	Lautenberg
Cantwell	Feinstein	Leahy
Carper	Fitzgerald	Levin
Chafee	Frist	Lieberman
Clinton	Graham (FL)	Lincoln

Lugar	Reed	Snowe
McCain	Reid	Specter
Mikulski	Roberts	Stabenow
Murkowski	Rockefeller	Stevens
Murray	Sarbanes	Talent
Nelson (FL)	Schumer	Voinovich
Nelson (NE)	Shelby	Warner
Pryor	Smith	Wyden

NAYS—20

Allard	Ensign	Miller
Allen	Enzi	Nickles
Burns	Gregg	Santorum
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Cornyn	Kyl	Sununu
Craig	Lott	Thomas
Crapo	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—2

Domenici	Kerry

The amendment (No. 2937) was agreed to.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:45 p.m., recessed until 2:18 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. FRIST).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I may be witnessing a first to see our majority leader as the Presiding Officer at this moment. Welcome to the podium. We are pleased to have you there.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EVERYONE ACT—Continued

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, we are debating welfare reform. It is critical to our country that we do this and revitalize it. It is a major piece of legislation that has been very successful over the years, getting people out of welfare into a productive job in our economy.

I don't know who the historian was who once said it. He was an economist and a historian. He said, The greatest form of welfare in the world is a good job in the private sector—we know that to be a fact—a good well-paying job.

When you cannot find that, welfare in our country is that safety net we have designed and defined for those who truly need it, but recognizing that it is not a place to stay; it is a place to catch you if you fall, to help you, and to provide for you and your family, but only in the temporary form so we can get people off of welfare and back out into the private sector and into a job.

In a few moments, the Senator from Massachusetts is going to talk about jobs and level of pay in those jobs. I thought for just a few moments it would be appropriate as we talk about welfare and as we talk about jobs and how much we pay for jobs as a minimum wage, that we ought to talk about job creation in this country and how critically important it is.

Some have said our recovery out of this recession has been jobless. Well, that is not true. A lot of jobs are being created out there, and a lot of people are now going back to work—not as rapidly as we had hoped they would, but certainly they are headed back to work.

NATIONAL ENERGY POLICY

But there is a dark cloud over the horizon, and that dark cloud is there today because the Congress of the United States, and the Senate in particular, a year ago denied this country a new national energy policy and the ability to begin to produce energy, once again.

We are no longer energy independent. That one driving force we had in the economic matrix that said we could produce something for less—because we had the great ingenuity of the American workforce and because the input of energy was less than anywhere else in the world, so we could produce it better and we could produce it for less cost—is no longer true today.

If you went out this morning to refuel your car before you headed to work, you paid at an all-time high level of gas prices. Why? Because the Senate of the United States denied this country a national energy policy.

We know it is happening. We have seen it headed in that direction for over 7 years. Many of us have pled on this floor to develop that policy to get us back into production. But, no, we are not into production, we are not producing at a level we could be and we should be. We are not creating all the kinds of alternative fuels we ought to be. Why? Because we have not established a national energy policy in the last 8 years.

The world has changed a great deal. We are now over half dependent on foreign sources of oil. Of course, there are many who will rush to the floor and point a finger at OPEC or point a finger at the political turmoil in Venezuela and say: Well, that is their problem, and it is their fault we are paying higher energy prices. Or we will have that proverbial group that will run out and point their finger at big oil.

Why don't we point the finger at the Senate, for once, which has denied this country a national energy policy? The Senator from New Mexico was on the floor a few moments ago, Mr. BINGAMAN. He worked 2 years ago to get one. I helped him, and we could not quite get there.

Then the other Senator from New Mexico did produce a policy, and we passed it in a bipartisan way. It went to the House, and we conferenced it, and the House passed the conference. It came back here. It fell apart. It fell apart for one little reason or another, but the bottom line was the politics of it. The Senate of the United States has again denied the consumer and the working man and woman the right to have an energy source and a competitive energy price to go to work on, or to work with when they get to work, or to have for recreation, or to have to heat their home, or to have to turn the lights on in their house, and to illuminate and energize the computer they use.

The driving force of the economy of this country is not the politics on the street today; it is the politics of energy. It always has been. When we have competitive, moderate-to-low energy prices, the American worker can produce and compete with any workforce in the world. But today we are slowly but surely denying them that.

Natural gas is at an all-time high. Gas at the pump is at an all-time high. Electricity prices in many areas around this country are at an all-time high. The great tragedy is, many of those prices are artificially inflated because of the politics of the issue, because this Senate has denied the American worker and the American consumer a national energy policy.

Now, some say, well, the wealthy are going to get wealthy off of this. What about the poor? Has anybody ever calculated that high energy prices impact poor people more than any other segment in our society?

If you are a household with an average annual income of $50,000, you only spend about 4 percent of your income on energy. But if you are a household with an income between $10,000 and $24,000, you spend 13 percent; you spend a higher proportion of your total income on energy. If you are a household of $10,000 or less, or at about 130-plus percent of poverty, you spend almost 30 percent of everything you make on energy—whether it is the gas you put in your car, or the throwing of a switch to illuminate the light bulb in your ceiling, or the heat for your home.

High energy prices impact poor people more, and yet we will still hear these great allegations on the floor that somebody is going to get rich off of energy.

No. Poor people are going to get poorer with higher energy prices. That is the impact and the reality of the problems we face.

The United States is making do now with a lot less energy on a per capita basis. Some say: We can just conserve our way out of this situation. We are doing a very good job in conservation today than we did, let's say, 20 years ago.

Let me give you a figure or two. In the last three decades, the U.S. economy has grown 126 percent, but energy use has grown only 30 percent. In other words, as our economy grows today, as a rate of a unit of production, we use less energy. Why? Efficiencies, new technologies. But as we grow, we are still going to need more energy. So the old argument about conserving your way out—and, oh, my goodness, if I have heard it once on the Senate floor in the last 6 years, I have heard it 2 or 3 times, that automobile fuel consumption has dropped 60 percent in that 20-year period. And we ought to be proud of that.

That is partly a work of the Senate, but that is also the new technologies and efficiencies. Per capita oil consumption is down 20 percent since 1978.