

instruction programs to ensure that every child can read by the end of the third grade. Also included is \$104 million for the Early Reading First Program which funds programs that support activities in existing pre-school programs designed to enhance the verbal bills, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, pre-reading skills and early language development of children ages 3 through 5. To help struggling middle and high school students improve their reading skills the bill includes \$35 million.

For community learning centers activities, such as before and afterschool, recreational, drug, violence prevention and family literacy programs, the bill includes \$991 million for 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

The bill provides \$306.5 million for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. These funds will be used to assist high schools to help low-income students prepare for and pursue postsecondary education.

To improve post-secondary education opportunities for low-income, first-generation college students, the committee recommendation provides \$836.5 million for the TRIO program, to assist in more intensive outreach and support services for low income youth.

The bill includes \$217 million for charter school grants which help in the planning, development and implementation of charter schools. Funding for this important program has more than doubled since fiscal year 1999.

Also included is \$26 million for voluntary public school choice to expand programs, especially for parents whose children attend low-performing public schools.

For student aid programs, the bill provides \$15.1 billion, an increase of \$838 million over last year's amount. Pell grants, the cornerstone of student financial aid is funded at \$4,050. The bill also includes \$4.3 billion to pay off the estimated Pell grant shortfall. The bill also includes an increase of \$26 million for the supplemental educational opportunity grants program.

In this Nation, we know all too well that unemployment wastes valuable talent and potential, and ultimately weakens our economy. The bill before us today provides \$5.25 billion for job training programs. This includes \$1.58 billion for the Job Corps; \$893 million for adult training; and \$1.47 billion for retraining dislocated workers.

The bill provides \$1.55 billion for worker protection programs. While progress has been made in this area, there are still far too many work-related injuries and illnesses. The funds provided will continue the programs that inspect business and industry, assist employers in weeding out occupational hazards and protect workers' pay and pensions.

There are many other notable accomplishments in this bill, but for the sake of time, I mentioned just several of the key highlights, so that the Nation may grasp the scope and importance of this bill.

In closing, I again thank Senator HARKIN and his staff and the other Senators on the subcommittee for their cooperation.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have been asked by the distinguished majority leader to propound a unanimous consent request.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. SPECTER. I say, this is a license for Senators not to bring amendments to the floor on this bill, but this license is short lived. It is not going to last too long.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 1 hour.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. And for other Senators who may want to speak, I may be a little less than an hour or I may be a little more than an hour. I do not intend to be here forever, just in case my colleagues are wondering.

HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the situation in Louisiana, particularly New Orleans, as it relates to the Katrina hurricane. I do that because of a very devoted constituent by the name of Craig Van Waardhuizen of 3716 Pearl Lane, Waterloo, IA. We are members of Prairie Lakes Church, Cedar Falls, IA, a Baptist church. He approached me because he had bad experiences in trying to help people in Louisiana at the height of the hurricane and the period of time thereafter.

He says things just were not right. That is quite obvious to all of the country. I had a chance to hear it from a person who witnessed it. He kept a diary of his experiences. He is a sincere enough individual to spend time with me, sincere enough individual to put things down in writing, and he is a sincere enough person who would like to have things that happened to him not happen again in a future natural disaster.

So I promised my friend in Waterloo that I would make sure the entire Senate knew of his situation. It will be on record for people to refer to so corrective action can be taken.

I suppose most of this falls in the area of FEMA's responsibility, but I am not so sure but what some of it doesn't fall into the area of local responders and to State people as well. But FEMA is the one most referred to. So I am going to spend my time reading word for word from this diary so that people will know the trials and tribulations of one bus driver, trying to

help people all the way from Iowa, going to Louisiana to help people there who had problems.

This starts on September 1, which is the Thursday after Katrina hit. I believe Katrina hit either on that Saturday or Sunday, the 27th or 28th of August. Presumably some time after Katrina hit, my constituent friend was desiring to help the people in need there. He was affiliated with a bus company that could provide transportation. This starts on September 1, but presumably on the days of Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday before September 1, he was trying to get involved in helping:

September 1, 2005, Thursday: Another day of searching on the internet and contacting our motorcoach associations has brought no success as we (Northwest Iowa Transportation, Inc.) look for ways to help in New Orleans. We have coaches and drivers available to go help in moving people out of the New Orleans area. However, we do not believe that we should just drive down to New Orleans without any contact. It is discouraging when you want to help and yet can't find the avenue to help.

September 2, Friday: There is a light in the tunnel. Today we were contacted by Utah Transportation Management to see if we had any coaches and drivers that could go help in evacuation of New Orleans. Finally a way to head to New Orleans and provide the assistance that we have wanted to do since a hurricane hit last Monday. Since this help will fall under FEMA we will be able to use four drivers and two motorcoaches to drive straight through to New Orleans. After finding three other drivers who were willing to help in this effort I head out to New Orleans. We pack extra supplies in the coaches along with water and food for ourselves. We also take along extra paper towels and toilet paper. About 9:00 p.m. we head south from Waterloo—

That is Waterloo, IA—

ready to go provide assistance to those in need.

Saturday, September 3: Driving straight through the night and switching off with driving we arrive at the staging area at Le Place, LA. The first thing we notice is the large number of motorcoaches waiting in the staging area and many more like ourselves, just pulling in. Our first order of business was to get in line to refill with fuel. We didn't stop for fuel on our way as we had been told that FEMA would provide fuel for all motorcoaches when we arrived at Le Place. We are ready to go to work and start moving people. The fuel was brought in by the National Guard and they did all the refueling in Le Place. Finally, it was our turn to get fuel. While fueling, we visited with the other drivers to find out what had been happening. We learned that after fueling you would get in another line and wait for orders. Nobody seemed to know who was in charge of the operation and there was very little communication. Finally a man with an orange vest came and asked us to get in line to go transport people. We lined up with 12 other coaches. Nobody moved until the state patrol was ready to provide escort. At last we have action. We are headed into New Orleans to do what we came down to do, move people. We had traveled about 10 miles when we were pulled onto the shoulder. No reason given for pulling all of us over. We sat and waited on the side of the highway wondering what was going to happen.

After a waiting about 45 minutes we started traveling again, and it was soon apparent