

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

IMPROVING EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE AND RESPONSE ACT

• Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, today I wish to discuss the Improving Emergency Medical Care and Response Act of 2007, which I introduced yesterday. I am joined in this effort by Representative HENRY WAXMAN, who introduced a companion bill in the House.

This bill focuses on improving communication systems used in emergency care response and provides financial support for research in emergency medicine. Disasters that strike our Nation, be it manmade or natural, can have catastrophic effects on the health and well-being of our citizens. The ability to provide adequate, timely health care following these “sudden-impact” events—or any emergency situation, for that matter—relies heavily on an effective and comprehensive emergency communication system. However, recent studies show that various emergency medical services throughout the country are struggling to efficiently handle just the day-to-day operations. Therefore, the concern is even greater when disaster does strike and the struggle becomes grossly amplified, ultimately exposing the gaps in our emergency care and response infrastructure. There was no clearer example of this than the flawed response to the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Patients waiting in the emergency department, ED, for extended periods of time or, potentially worse, patients leaving the ED before medical evaluation because of these long wait-times are both strong indicators that improved strategies and systems are needed to reduce the burden on our emergency medical services across the country. Extended offloading times and diversion of ambulances are also contributing factors to a slow emergency response, which can have a fatal impact on prehospital care. Unfortunately, we do not have to look far to see what tragedies will come from not addressing these issues. In fact, just months ago, tragedy struck Edith Isabel Rodriguez, a Los Angeles woman who made national headlines after she was ignored by hospital personnel, dismissed by 9-1-1 dispatchers, and denied immediate care despite vomiting blood and writhing in pain for 45 minutes until she died. How does this happen in a country that boasts one of the highest standards of living of any nation in the world? Ms. Rodriguez’s death is unacceptable and is a harrowing reminder of the ultimate penalty our citizens are paying for a fractured emergency care system.

For these reasons, my bill establishes demonstration programs designed to coordinate emergency medical services, expand communication and patient-tracking systems, and implement

a regionalized data management system. The types of information garnered from such demonstration programs will contain vital information such as the impact of emergency care systems on patient outcomes, program efficiency, financial impact, and identification of remaining barriers to developing regionalized, accountable emergency care systems. Of equal importance is the bill’s support for research in the field of emergency medicine and emergency medical care systems. Specifically, funds are requested to support research in the basic science of emergency medicine, model of service delivery, and incorporation of basic scientific research into day-to-day practice.

Improving and identifying the best practices of emergency medical care is necessary to ensure high-quality, efficient, and reliable care for all who need it. I ask my fellow colleagues to support this legislation so that we can better prepare for emergencies and future disasters. •

BOSTON CELTICS “HEROES AMONG US” AWARDS 2007

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, all of us in Massachusetts are proud of the Boston Celtics. The team is one of the most storied franchises in NBA history, and its players are also impressive leaders in the community. Each year, the Celtics honor outstanding persons in New England as “Heroes Among Us”—men and women who have made an especially significant impact on the lives of others.

The award, now in its 10th year, recognizes men and women who stand tall in service to their community. The extraordinary achievements of this year’s honorees include saving lives, sacrificing for others, overcoming obstacles to achieve goals, and lifelong commitments to improving the lives of those around them. The winners include persons of all ages and all walks of life—students, community leaders, founders of nonprofit organizations, member of the clergy, and many others.

At home games during the season each year, the Celtics and their fans salute the efforts of various honorees in special presentation to them on the basketball court. So far, over 500 persons have received the “Heroes Among Us” award during the past decade.

The award has become one of the most widely recognized honors in New England. I commend each of the honorees for the 2006 to 2007 season, and I ask unanimous consent to have their names, their achievements, and their communities printed in the RECORD.

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

HERO AMONG US AWARD RECIPIENTS 2006–2007

Arnold “Red” Auerbach (Boston, MA) founded the Red Auerbach Youth Foundation in 1985 to encourage the healthy development of children.

Ayman Kafel (Sharon, MA) as a member of the Massachusetts National Guard, served on

the Military Police Headquarters’ Task Force and later on the Protective Service Security Squad during his one year tour in Iraq.

David Youngerman (Hudson, MA) was chosen to be the Child Ambassador for this year’s Miles for Miracles Walk for his recovery from Moyamoya Disease.

Catherine Pisacane (Hopedale, MA) is the founder and executive director of Project Smile, a non-profit organization that collects stuffed animals for police officers, fire fighters and paramedics to give to children.

Helen Ford (Cambridge, MA) worked 28 years in security for the Cambridge School Department.

Eric Christopher (Melrose, MA) has been with the Gloucester Fire Department for 8 years and in January went into a fire without protective gear to save the life of a woman trapped in a blaze.

Lawanda Myrick (Dorchester, MA) has been a committed parent, employee and advocate for the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Lynn Dadekian (Worcester, MA) volunteered to donate her liver for a chance for her ailing father to live.

Robbie and Brittany Bergquist (Norwell, MA) started the “Cell Phones for Soldiers” campaign, which has collected over \$1,000,000 and has sent more than 80,000 calling cards to troops in the Middle East.

Corp. Gregory M. Chartier (East Templeton, MA) upon returning from Afghanistan, volunteered to be deployed to Iraq to help create a local police force.

Brian Binette (Saco, ME) was born with cerebral palsy, but has overcome this challenge and will begin a career at the Saco Island School in Maine as a mentor, assistant teacher and head of the school’s monthly newsletter.

Clementina Chery (Dorchester, MA) co-founded the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute and also founded the Mothers’ Walk for Peace, an annual walk now in its tenth year.

Benjamin Smith (Springfield, MA) is the executive director of Dream Studios Inc., to introduce urban youth to the performing arts and provide mentoring to strengthen their academic skills.

Alan Borgal (Boston, MA) has spent the last 31 years with the Animal Rescue League of Boston, working tirelessly for the care and protection of animals.

Dick Arieta (Kingston, MA) has been the head basketball coach at Silver Lake Regional High School since 1970 and has instilled his values of sportsmanship, hard work and teamwork to all he has coached.

Dante Carroccia (Johnston, RI) singlehandedly assisted a man injured in an automobile accident and saved his life.

Helen Lamb (Boston, MA) founded “Camp Jabbawocky” in 1953, which has brought the simple joys of childhood to thousands of children with disabilities.

Seth Lampert (Sudbury, MA) earned the Volunteer of the Year Award from Easter Seals for his fundraising efforts for the annual Easter Seals Shootout.

Kevin Sullivan (Carver, MA) moved his truck to absorb the impact of a speeding truck heading directly towards a highway work crew and a police officer on duty, probably saving their lives.

Jennifer Putnam (Wellesley, MA) a volunteer for Horizons for Homeless Children, has spearheaded the preparation of annual feasts for hundreds of homeless children and their families.

Danny Vierra (Somerville, MA) is a Transit Police Officer who pulled a man from the railroad tracks before a speeding train could hit him.

Brooke Rallis (Hampton, NH) is one of only seven people to have overcome the type of