

more than that. Not only does it not spend more, it doesn't authorize more. I think that is very important for people to understand. There is some confusion from some things I have read in different publications that make it appear that we have increased the authorization. Some things have been moved around, but the bottom line is it has remained unchanged.

The other thing that is important to repeat is that as big as this bill was, the 2005 bill we are scheduled to get into again next year, in 2009, it still doesn't take care of the problem. We have a problem in this country with the \$286 billion figure; it doesn't even maintain what we have today. That is critical. I am hoping the committee that was established for the purpose of exploring new ways of funding transportation will come up with something a little more creative than they have so far because we are not going to be able to do it just by redoing and expanding what Eisenhower started many years ago. So we need to have this bill in order to go ahead and finish the projects that we have authorized and that are paid for at this time, and we won't do it unless we can pass this bill.

So I hope anyone—I would agree with Senator BOXER—anyone with amendments, let's bring them down and talk about them, and I am available to talk, and I am doing that as we speak. I have spoken with a couple of Members who have talked about an amendment. So if you have any amendments, bring them down so Senator BOXER and I can visit with you about the amendments.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AARP

Mr. REID. Madam President, I rise today to call the attention of the Senate to the 50th Anniversary of a remarkable organization that boasts 35 million members, for whom it provides services ranging from discounted prescription drugs, to travel services, to financial services. Most of us on Capitol Hill are far more familiar with this organization as the tireless advocate for the interests of Americans over the age of 50. The organization, of course, is AARP.

In its half-century of service, the organization that we know today as AARP has been transformed from its modest beginnings in 1958 when Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, a retired high school principal, transformed the National Retired Teachers' Organization into the American Association for Retired Persons. The organization was

known under this name until 1999 when it became just AARP to reflect the fact that many of its members are still active in the labor force.

Characteristic of the work of AARP over the past 50 years has been its efforts to influence national policy on behalf of the well being of Americans over the age of 50 and to defend the programs that protect them, especially Social Security and Medicare. More recently, AARP has spearheaded the effort to get bipartisan action in Congress to provide all Americans with health care and long-term financial security with its Divided We Fail campaign. I commend AARP for its outstanding leadership on these issues, which are so critical to millions of Americans.

When President Bush in 2005, fresh from his election victory, made the privatization of Social Security his top domestic priority, he met his match in AARP, which mobilized its members to oppose this very risky plan. Congressional Democrats worked very closely with AARP in that effort, and in the end we were successful, at least temporarily. Unfortunately, given the continuing support for privatization among many in Washington, that battle will have to continue in the years ahead, and I look forward to working closely with AARP to continue to make the case against privatization, and to make sure that America keeps its promise to our seniors.

So I offer a cordial birthday greeting to an organization that is 50 years old and stronger than ever. AARP has kept pace with the needs of mature Americans and, more importantly, it has kept faith with them. In the process, it has made this country a better place for all Americans.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY PROGRAM

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise today to acknowledge the passage of S. 793, the reauthorization of the Traumatic Brain Injury, TBI, Program. Both the Senate and House of Representatives have passed this bill and it will now be sent to the President's desk to be signed into law.

I thank my colleague and coauthor of the Senate bill, Senator KENNEDY, and his staff for their hard work over the past few years. I also extend my gratitude to Senator ENZI and his staff for their diligent efforts in helping to reauthorize this important program.

I also must thank the leaders of this effort in the House, Representatives BILL PASCRELL, Jr., FRANK PALLONE, Jr., and their staffs who have been so dedicated to helping individuals with TBI.

Also, this bill would not have been possible without the cooperation and input from involved organizations, such as the Brain Injury Association of America, BIAA; the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators, NASHIA; the National Brain In-

jury Research, Treatment and Training Foundation, NBIRTT; and the National Disability Rights Network, NDRN; and I thank them all for their contributions.

It means a lot to the 5.3 million Americans living with TBI, and their families, to reauthorize the only Federal program that helps them. The Federal TBI Program comprises prevention and surveillance activities at the Center for Disease Control, CDC, research at the National Institutes of Health, NIH, and grants to States from the Health Resources and Services Administrations, HRSA. This reauthorization bill expands and improves those activities, and includes provisions to look at the reintegration of war vets returning to their communities.

Each year, 1.4 million people sustain a TBI and face long-term or lifelong need for help to perform activities of daily living as a result. Direct medical costs and indirect costs such as lost productivity of TBI totaled an estimated \$60 billion in the United States in 2000. We can help truncate those costs and ensure that people are connected to the services they need by continuing this important program.

It has been a labor of love to draft and enact legislation to reauthorize this important program. On behalf of individuals living with TBI, and their families, I thank my colleagues in Congress for passing this legislation and reaffirming our commitment to helping those with who suffer from traumatic brain injuries.

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, yesterday marked the official beginning of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Since 1981, communities in Vermont and across the Nation have observed this week with candlelight vigils and public rallies to renew our commitment to crime victims and their families. It is vitally important that we recognize the needs of crime victims and their family members, and work together to promote victims' rights and services.

We have been able to make some progress during the past 27 years to provide victims with greater rights and assistance. In particular, I was honored to support the passage of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984, VOCA, Public Law 98-473, which established the Crime Victims Fund. The Crime Victims Fund allows the Federal Government to provide grants to State crime victim compensation programs, direct victim assistance services, and services to victims of Federal crimes. Nearly 90 percent of the Crime Victims Fund is used to award victim assistance formula grants and provide State crime victim compensation. These VOCA-funded victim assistance programs serve nearly 4 million crime victims each year, including victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse,