

sharing in the common elements of mankind, compassion and love.

The United Nations Population Division gathered data from more than 100 countries and found that in a world of 2.2 billion children under the age of 18, fewer than 12 per 100,000 are being adopted. In other words, in a total global population of 6.5 billion, there are only about 260,000 adoptions of all kinds annually including those within countries, across borders and of step children. In the United States we have seen an upward trend in international adoptions from 7,083 in 1990 to 17,718 in 2000 and over 20,000 international adoptions in 2007.

I have received several letters of concern from many Arkansans inquiring as to what the U.S. Government is doing to help these children find their way to loving homes in Arkansas. In fact, the United States has taken several important steps to protect the rights of the child and to assist families in the international adoption process. From a global level, the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption—Hague Adoption Convention—a broad multilateral treaty, was signed by the United States in March of 1994. In 2000, the Senate and the House passed the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 to implement the Convention. In 2006, the Department of State issued the final rule on the Accreditation and Approval of Agencies and Persons to implement the Convention and the Intercountry Adoption Act.

Legislation to help adoptive families pay for expenses associated with adoption procedures was signed by President Bill Clinton in 1996 to make improvements to the Internal Revenue Code to add a two-part adoption assistance tax relief program. The tax relief for adoption expenses has helped many families to be able to afford the financial costs of the actual adoption process. The Department of Homeland Security now issues immigrant visas to children entering the United States with adoptive parents who are U.S. citizens under the I-800 Visa Program, making them U.S. citizens when they reach U.S. soil.

On my part, I have signed several letters to international leaders concerning the importance of transparency in the adoption process in all countries, particularly in the signatories of the Hague Adoption Convention.

Our recognition of today's Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day provides us with a great opportunity to recognize the unique role and contributions of adoptive families in our country. Families created through adoption are special. They go through so much time and energy to find each other. We must celebrate these families who through perseverance and determination become whole and provide a loving environment for our next generation.

EXPANDED DNA COLLECTION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I was concerned to learn from the newspapers last week that the Federal Government is getting ready to publish a rule sanctioning the collection of DNA samples from all citizens arrested for Federal crimes and from many people detained as illegal immigrants. These samples may even be kept permanently as part of the Government's DNA database even if a person is ultimately exonerated.

I have long supported the analysis of DNA evidence to catch the guilty and exonerate the innocent. In 2000, I introduced the Innocence Protection Act, which included the Kirk Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program for defendants. This program, where appropriate, gave defendants access to the postconviction DNA testing necessary to prove their innocence in those cases where the system got it grievously wrong. As a former prosecutor, I was acutely aware that DNA testing could help prevent both the conviction of innocent defendants, and the criminal justice nightmare of the real wrongdoer remaining undiscovered and possibly at large.

In 2004, Congress passed the Innocence Protection Act as an important part of the Justice for All Act. Congress recognized the need for important changes in criminal justice forensics despite resistance from the current administration. The Justice for All Act authorized several other important programs to encourage the use of DNA evidence, which I strongly supported, notably including the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program to eliminate the nationwide backlog of rape kits and other evidence awaiting DNA testing in crime labs around the country. That important program has helped law enforcement to find the perpetrators of terrible crimes throughout the country and to ease the ordeal that crime victims go through.

But DNA testing, like any powerful tool—and particularly any powerful tool in the hands of the government must be used carefully. If abused, it can infringe on the privacy and civil liberties of Americans while doing little to prevent crime. I am concerned that the policy just announced may do exactly that.

When Senator KYL proposed the legislation that formed the basis for this policy, I said that it raised serious privacy concerns. Right now, a person's DNA can be collected immediately upon arrest, and it can be used immediately to search the DNA indexes for a possible "hit." But it cannot be added to the Federal index unless and until the person has been formally charged with a crime. This new policy allows DNA to be entered for those who have been arrested but not charged.

This change adds little or no value for law enforcement, while intruding on the privacy rights of people who are, in our system, presumed innocent. It creates an incentive for pretextual ar-

rests and will likely have a disproportionate impact on minorities and the poor. This policy may also make it harder for innocent people to have their DNA expunged from government databases.

Since I first spoke out against this provision in 2005, we have only seen more examples of abuses of power by this administration, including the Justice Department's improper firing of prosecutors for political reasons and the FBI's abuse of national security letter power given in the PATRIOT Act. In this light, the added power to collect and keep DNA information from potentially innocent people gives even more cause for concern.

I will study the proposed rules and policy carefully, and the Judiciary Committee will perform careful oversight of its implementation. We must ensure that DNA evidence is used aggressively and efficiently to make us safer, but also that it is used in a careful and appropriate way that secures our rights and increases our confidence in our justice system.

NATIONAL CHILD CARE WORTHY WAGE DAY

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I strongly support a resolution by Senator MENENDEZ supporting National Child Care Worthy Wage Day. I hope that it will shine a brighter light on the many challenges facing the early childhood education and care community and the importance of attracting and retaining excellent childcare workers.

Across the country today, nearly two-thirds of children under the age of 5 are in some form of nonparental care while their parents are at work and more and more research emphasizes that learning begins at birth. The quality of early care that children receive has a profound impact on the rest of their lives.

Children in high-quality early care and education programs are 30 percent more likely to graduate from high school and twice as likely to go to college. They are also 40 percent less likely to be held back a grade or need expensive special education programs.

Childcare is particularly effective for at-risk students. Important studies, including the research of both Nobel Laureate Economist James Heckman and Chairman of the Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke, show that quality early care and education can break the cycle of poverty and crime. Heckman's survey of at-risk boys who receive quality early education found that less than 10 percent of boys who participate will be convicted of a crime and less than 2 percent will end up on welfare—rates significantly lower than for those who do not receive such support.

The key to assuring quality early childhood education and care for our youth is access to a highly qualified educator or caregiver. Despite the obvious importance of their work, however,