

including doubling the number of adoptions from foster care over the decade. This means that 443,000 children from foster care have a permanent home and a family, and 3,600 are West Virginia children. A family and a permanent home makes all the difference for a child. The 1997 act also changed the reasonable efforts provisions to restore balance and help focus on the best interest of a child, and providing a safe, stable and permanent home.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 is a historic initiative to further promote adoption and permanency for children. It will eliminate, over time, the outdated connection between adoption assistance eligibility with the broken Aid To Families with Dependent Children, AFDC, a program that was terminated in 1996. The new Adoption Assistance Program is phased in over 10 years, starting with the oldest children or children who have been in care for over 5 years. The package also updates the adoption incentive program.

The bill gives States the option to invest in relative guardianship, a program that was tested and found very successful during the child welfare waivers. Children in relative placement tend to move less and get better reports from the teachers. The package also makes a special investment to promote the promising kinship navigator program to provide support and referrals to the millions of grandparents and relatives raising their kin. It provides new tools and direction to locate relatives as possible care providers. This is an important option that will lead to more permanency for children.

The bill also requires States to do more on educational stability and directs that each child has a coordinated health plan that includes dental and mental health care. This is fundamental for each child. To help staff do a better job serving children, the bill also invests in training programs.

The legislation will also invest in the more than 20,000 young people who age out of foster care, each year. First, it requires that the youth have full support in developing a transition plan 90 days before leaving care. It is not right or appropriate for a foster teen to leave care and move into a homeless shelter. The legislation also encourages States to extend foster care beyond the age of 18 if the young person is engaged in education, job training, employment, or has a disability that prevents such engagement. Young people need and deserve support, and we know that it makes a positive difference.

Finally, for the first time, thanks to Chairman BAUCUS' leadership, the Tribes and Tribal organization will have the option of direct access to Federal foster care to serve Native American children directly.

Many of the provisions in this package, particularly improvements in adoption assistance, have been among my priorities for years. It is exciting to

work with colleagues on a success, and it will be even more rewarding to work on its implementation for children and families in West Virginia and nationwide.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MEDIA CONSOLIDATION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I wish today to recognize the Department of Defense for its successful, BRAC-directed consolidation of the Army, Navy, and Air Force media activities into the new Defense Media Activity on October 1, 2008. The Department of Defense has greatly enhanced the consolidation by including the Marine Corps component and the American Forces Information Service in the new Defense Media Activity.

The consolidation will improve the effectiveness and efficiency with which the Department of Defense media operations provides critical news and information to our Armed Forces around the world. In the summer of 2011, the Defense Media Activity will locate its headquarters to a state-of-the-art facility at Fort Meade, MD.

The Defense Media Activity is staffed by about 1,700 dedicated military and civilian employees who work in 15 countries. I wish the Defense Media Activity continued success in their support of the men and women of our military services and their families.

TRIBUTE TO JIM MILLER

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to honor my former budget analyst for agriculture, Jim Miller, for his exemplary service. For the last 4 years, Jim has served me as my lead agriculture adviser. His efforts have helped produce great legislative successes for our Nation's farmers and ranchers.

Jim's knowledge of agriculture is extraordinary. His encyclopedic familiarity with Federal agriculture policy allowed him to know the answer to any question I would ask about agriculture. Throughout his service, he garnered the respect and admiration of his colleagues as well as other Senators for his intelligence and his good nature. His wise counsel will be missed.

Jim came to my office in August 2004 after working for the National Farmers Union. Even though Jim had 20 years of agriculture policy expertise and had farmed in his native Washington State for over 20 years before coming to Washington, he had never worked on Capitol Hill.

But he hit the ground running. Shortly after Jim joined my staff, he helped me pass an agriculture disaster assistance package for North Dakota farmers and ranchers in 2004. He also worked for 3 long years to secure additional disaster assistance for North Dakota farmers stricken with flooding in 2005 and severe drought in 2006.

I will always remember Jim for his work during the 2008 farm bill. Jim was

my lead negotiator and captain of my farm bill team. Without his leadership and dedication, this most recent farm bill would not be as strong as it is. He gave this effort thousands upon thousands of hours of his time, working with people on both sides of the aisle and in both Houses of Congress to get a fantastic end result. He was responsible for helping me deliver the top priorities for North Dakota producers: increased farm program support levels and a standing disaster program.

I thank him for helping this Congress produce what I think is the best farm bill we have ever had. And it isn't just me that thinks this—it is reflected in the recordbreaking votes we had in the Senate and the large margin of victory we had on overriding the President's two vetoes.

Since Jim left my office, he has re-joined the National Farmers Union. I will forever be grateful for his tireless efforts, his creative thinking, his coalition building, and friendship. I wish him all the best in his new endeavor.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING ROY SILVERSTEIN, M.D.

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to recognize the achievements of Dr. Roy Silverstein, an Ohioan who has dedicated his professional life to biomedical research and medicine.

Dr. Silverstein is currently chairman of the Department of Cell Biology and vice chair for translational research at the Lerner Research Institute, as well as professor of molecular medicine at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University.

Having chaired multiple grant review panels and published over 100 articles in various publications and scientific journals, Dr. Silverstein has accomplished an extraordinary number of professional milestones and achievements.

As committee chair for the American Society of Hematology, ASH, for the past 4 years, Dr. Silverstein has led the society's efforts to educate Members of Congress about hematology and the importance of Federal research funding. In this capacity, Dr. Silverstein has visited with me and my staff to educate us about the critical issues facing hematologists.

The skilled advocacy and research of Dr. Silverstein remind many of us in Congress of how crucial it is to keep NIH funding strong. His work demonstrates that NIH funding truly is a vehicle for enhancing the health and wellbeing of Americans. In addition to continuing his own research in blood clotting and bleeding disorders, Dr. Silverstein has also shown great commitment to educating our next generation of physicians and researchers. Dr. Silverstein is a superb advocate for his