

certainly would love to have her advocating on my behalf, and I know you two will make a great team in advocating on behalf of the people in Alaska, certainly seeing that they have been sent an injustice. I thank you for the opportunity to listen to that. Again, it is great to be here with the two Senators from Alaska.

FAMILY PLANNING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today many of our constituents are in town for the annual March for Life. They are expressing their strong concerns about an issue that has divided our Nation for decades: abortion.

This issue divides legislatures. It divides churches and communities. It even divides families. Parents often disagree with their children. Two sisters or two brothers may see the issue differently. Even husbands and wives may not see eye to eye.

And yet, the American people look to their elected leaders to come together and address the issue.

My position on the fundamental issue is clear: abortion should be safe and legal, consistent with *Roe v. Wade*. A decision this personal is best left to a woman, her family, her doctor, and her conscience.

But I don't think the issue ends there. We may never reach a consensus on abortion itself, but we can go beyond the divisions, acknowledge that women have a right to an abortion in America, and still work together to reduce the number of abortions.

So I would like to take a step back and talk about some of the things we can do to prevent unwanted pregnancies, which is a goal I think all of us in this chamber share.

Nearly half of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned that is almost 3 million times a year that a woman and a man are confronted with the news that, contrary to their intentions, the woman is pregnant.

We can make a greater effort to ensure that couples have access to the information and services they need to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

First, we need to invest in comprehensive evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs. Nearly 1 million teen girls become pregnant each year, and it's time we focus on helping them prevent those pregnancies.

Next, we need to ensure that women can afford contraception by expanding funding for the Title X family planning program, which provides a critical safety net that both improves women's health and saves taxpayers money.

Low-income women are four times more likely to have unintended pregnancies than their higher-income peers. Democrats have proposed that women who are entitled to Medicaid-funded labor and delivery also be given access to family planning services through the Medicaid program. If we will cover the childbirth, why would we

not cover the prevention services that would help avoid the unintended pregnancy?

And for women with private health insurance, we must ensure that FDA-approved prescription contraceptives are covered to the same extent as other prescription drugs and devices. If we want women and men to take the responsible steps to avoid unintended pregnancies, we must give them access to the family planning options that will empower them to do so. Ensuring that contraceptive coverage is a covered service in our health plans is a commonsense way to address that issue.

It is also time to restore common sense in other areas.

Women must have timely and medically accurate information about another alternative: emergency contraception.

This product is FDA approved, and can prevent pregnancy and thus the need for abortion. Greater awareness of it could substantially reduce the staggering number of unintended pregnancies.

The facts are also on the side of lifting the so-called "Mexico City" policy that controls how family planning organizations in other countries may use their own funds. The global gag rule requires that, as a condition for receipt of U.S. funding, private and international organizations must agree not to use their own non-American funds to perform abortions, provide abortion counseling, or even lobby to make or keep abortion legal in their countries.

By law, Federal funds cannot be used for abortions. Audits have demonstrated that, in the years when the Mexico City policy has been lifted, Federal funds have not been used for abortions. So this is not about abortion.

This is about whether international family planning programs will be allowed the same rights of freedom of speech and action that domestic programs have. We should not be dictating what groups do with their own independent funds as a condition of receiving U.S. family planning funding.

So often, the battle over abortion has been extended into unnecessary battles over contraception. But there are other policy areas where people who disagree over abortion should be able to come together.

First, we need to support pregnant women when they find themselves in a difficult situation.

We must work to ensure that they have access to health care both before and after the child is born; parenting programs; income support; nutrition assistance; and caring adoption alternatives.

Finally, we must look beyond the immediate crises and work to address the underlying conditions that can affect a couple's response to an unplanned pregnancy. Affordable health care, secure jobs with good wages, expanded child care options, and improved educational

assistance can make it easier for a couple to welcome a child into the family. These, again, are areas where we should be able to come together and make progress.

TRIBUTE TO SENATORS

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to speak today regarding the departure of my esteemed colleague from New York, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton. I have known Senator Clinton for many years now, and I have worked closely with her since the time she served as First Lady of the United States and then as she so aptly served the people of New York in the Senate. Today, I am sure that I am joined by many of my colleagues in saying that her compassion, her skill, and her example in this institution will be missed.

As a former First Lady of the United States, I was very impressed with the work Senator Clinton did to increase the level of care for women and children from around the world. You may recall that her service in this capacity knew no boundaries or borders as millions of lives were touched both here in the United States and abroad by her care, by her understanding, and by her tenacity in helping people receive the level of care and attention they so justly deserved. Indeed, Senator Clinton reminded us all that women's rights are not to be separated from human rights and that through this empowerment we have the potential to improve relations, eradicate violence, and increase prosperity. This is the vision and compassion that served her so well as a former First Lady of the United States, and this is the same compassion that continued to highlight her time here in the Senate.

Although her time in this legislative body has been relatively brief, the accomplishments of Senator Clinton have been many. If I may, let me highlight just two contrasting examples. The first example comes from 2007 when I worked closely with Senator Clinton on the Biologics Price and Protection Innovation Act. It was through these tough negotiations, numerous committee meetings, and candid discussions that I again was privileged to witness Senator Clinton's skill in bringing large groups of affected parties together in the spirit of compromise. With so many competing interests and so much attention being drawn to this legislation, I was appreciative of Senator Clinton's skills in negotiation, in understanding competing interests, and in listening to all of the parties involved in passing this important legislation out of the Senate.

The second example I would like to mention comes from 2008 with little fanfare. It is a simple resolution and one that probably did not receive much attention, but it was a resolution that meant something to me and it meant something to Senator Clinton. I speak