

think of the reasons for it. When a smoker of several decades finally receives the help that he needs to quit so that he can watch his grandchildren grow up, he most likely does not pause to reflect on why he received free cessation services. But none of these things happened accidentally. They came to pass because of the heroic and humble efforts of a dedicated public servant, Jenelle Krishnamoorthy. For 10 years now, Jenelle has shown up for work in my office with the singular goal of improving the health of Americans. She has succeeded beyond measure. For that, I owe her my thanks, and so too do tens of millions of Americans.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, today I express my opposition to the President's plan to grant executive amnesty to 4 million to 5 million illegal immigrants residing in the United States.

By circumventing Congress on immigration and instituting his will through executive actions, President Obama is eroding the very foundation of our country and form of government. This sets a dangerous precedent where future Presidents can flout any law they happen to disagree with and alter the law without going through Congress. Each branch of government is to act as a check against the others and not sit idly by as one exercises authority it does not have. A constitutional law professor should know that.

I believe we all agree that our immigration system is broken—both the legal system which allows individuals to visit and work in our country and the failures which continue to allow others to reside illegally within our borders. The first step we need to take to fix our system is to secure our borders and bolster interior enforcement. We cannot reduce illegal immigration without better border security and entry/exit enforcement measures. We also need to ensure that we have a strong, workable employment verification system in place, because if Congress can ensure that only authorized job seekers gain employment in this country, then we remove the incentive for illegal immigration—and we cannot grant those who are here illegally amnesty.

Yet this week the President intends to circumvent the will of Congress by illegally granting amnesty to 4 million to 5 million illegal immigrants. This cannot stand. The American people do not want it, some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have advocated against it, and the President himself has said more than 20 times that he does not have the authority to take this action. I am certain that the Republicans in the Senate will take action next year when we become the majority, and I look forward to being a part of that cause.

But I must be clear: this is part of a much larger fight. I know all of my colleagues remember the unconstitutional

NLRB recess appointments the President made in 2012. In that case, the Supreme Court rejected his move, but it hasn't stopped the President from pushing forward. He has proposed a cap and tax proposal through regulation that Congress has already rejected, and I know my colleagues from coal-producing States intend to fight that EPA rule with me. I know my colleagues from Western States also intend to join me in fighting the EPA's proposed rule that could allow the administration to regulate all bodies of water, no matter how small, and regardless of whether the water is on public or private property.

This week's action is the latest step too far by the President, and I will continue to fight executive overreach—including amnesty by executive order—whether by targeting rampant, unaccountable Federal spending, working to reverse illegal executive orders with legitimate Federal laws or using the Congressional Review Act to reject the President's actions. I will be looking closely at every option.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2013

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I would like to thank Chairman HARKIN, Ranking Member ALEXANDER, and sponsors Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR for their tremendous work to bring the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 to passage. I thank all of my colleagues in the House and Senate who helped get us to this point.

As many of my colleagues have commented, it is well past time that we take up a reauthorization of this important legislation. The Child Care and Development Block Grant, CCDBG, has not been reauthorized since 1996. In the nearly two decades since, our understanding of early childhood development, and the importance of high-quality child care and early learning, has expanded dramatically.

Investing in high-quality early learning opportunities such as child care and pre-K sets children on the path to success. This bill updates Federal standards to ensure that the Federal Government is supporting high-quality child care for low-income children. The legislation we have passed sets a new standard for child care in America, making sure that Federal dollars are going to providers who are committed to providing child care that meets certain criteria, such as health and safety standards.

Many of these changes reflect proposals I have put forth in previous Congresses to improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant, such as the Starting Early, Starting Right Act. I am encouraged that we were able to reach consensus on many of the provisions I have supported in the past, and that they are represented in this bill.

I would have liked to go further. I believe we need to increase our investment in high-quality child care, and

make it easier for child care providers to access training and education opportunities that will help them become better at caring for children and helping them learn. I would like to increase the incentives for States to invest in quality ratings and improvement systems, QRIS, which encourage child care providers to make continuous improvements in the quality of the care they provide and the facilities they use, often through financial incentives such as higher reimbursement rates when a certain quality level is reached.

While the authorized appropriations levels in this bill represent a 16% increase over the next 6 years—we still have a long way to go. Nationwide, the number of children served with CCDBG funding from 2012 to 2013 fell by 47,500 children. In Pennsylvania, nearly 2,800 fewer children were served. The important provisions for health, safety, and quality in this bill are not without their cost, and Congress must fully fund them. No family, child care provider, or State should have to make a choice between serving more children or providing quality care. We owe our most vulnerable children no less.

Even with the continued need for more funding, I still believe this legislation represents a significant improvement over current law and major progress for families. For the first time, we are requiring all States to develop robust health and safety standards, and to institute a consistent background check system for child care providers.

We are requiring States to formally coordinate their early learning programs, to improve service coordination and delivery. We are allowing children who qualify for a subsidy to receive a year of care before their eligibility is re-determined, promoting stability and continuity for the entire family and encouraging the child to develop strong relationships with his or her teachers and peers in child care.

We are increasing the investment in quality, from the 4 percent per year currently required in law to 9 percent within 5 years, and including a separate set-aside for infants and toddlers. Quality is a continuum, and a continual investment; it is not a one-time purchase, it is something we need to support and sustain.

I thank Chairman HARKIN, Ranking Member ALEXANDER, and Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR again for all of the work that they and their staff have done to get us to this point. When Congress works together children and family in this Nation all benefit. With the President's signature, parents can rest a little easier knowing that when they leave their child at child care, they will receive great care.