

such as Bulgaria and Romania, which have a great need to revitalize their respective economies.

We should support infrastructure programs that respond to the greater economic vitality of the entire region no matter where they are located.

As the international community continues to examine its options and alternatives for the redevelopment of the region, they should consider removing the outer wall of sanctions to allow the IMF and the World Bank into Serbia to promote its long-term reconstruction, understanding that the Serbian people will know that this cannot happen with Milosevic's vice-grip on all the institutions in the country.

There is a responsibility on the part of the countries of NATO to recognize that the Balkan nations are European, and they must be brought aggressively into the European fold.

The fact that the Europeans are taking on the lion's share of rebuilding the infrastructure and economy is the best guarantee that Southeast Europe will join the European and world economies, and presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make lasting and significant changes in that part of Europe.

For that challenge to become a reality, the people of Southeastern Europe, including the people of Slovenia and Croatia, must understand that they all have a symbiotic relationship.

By working together, their economies will improve, their standard of living will increase and the nationalism and ethnic cleansing that has plagued them for centuries will end.

I have often said that "there is some good that blows in an ill wind," and I consider this war to be an "ill wind."

However, the good that is blowing is the opportunity for the United States and NATO, to provide the impetus for a lasting peace to prevail throughout Southeastern Europe.

We can provide the reconstruction assistance that righted the economies of the rest of Europe after World War II and which has made them economically prosperous and willing defenders of the rights of all men and women.

We have had two world wars that have sprung from Europe in this century. We have a chance to guarantee that there will be no such wars in the 21st Century by helping restore Southeast Europe. It is important to the world, and its important to the strategic and national interests of the United States of America.

I have two mottoes: "Together, we can do it" and the other is our state motto, "With God, all things are possible."

I am confident that working together with our allies and with God's help, we can get the job done.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The distinguished Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask to proceed for 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I see my colleague on the other side. I have been asked by the Senator from Michigan for some time. What is the remaining time to be divided between the Senator from Michigan and the Senator from Minnesota?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Ohio has 8½ minutes remaining. Under the previous order, the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, or his designee, is recognized for up to 30 minutes. Under the previous order, the Senator from Kansas, Mr. ROBERTS, is recognized to speak for up to 15 minutes and then morning business is to be closed at 1 p.m.

Mr. KENNEDY. If the good Presiding Officer adds up the times, does that take us to 1 o'clock?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Normally, we grant the full time of individual Senators. It is the Chair's opinion that will be the case, in that the ag appropriations bill is to be taken up at 1 o'clock, but I believe the Senator will be protected.

Mr. KENNEDY. I ask unanimous consent that the time which remains be divided between the Senator from Michigan and the Senator from Minnesota, after my 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank the Chair.

PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I will address the Senate this morning on a subject which I believe needs attention in the Senate and also needs action by this body, and that issue is the legislation called the Patients' Bill of Rights.

The Patients' Bill of Rights is legislation which has been before the Senate for some 2 years. It is a rather simple bill. It is understandable. It is a rather commonsense bill. That is, we are, with this legislation, going to give assurances to the American people when they purchase insurance, that the medical profession, the doctors and the patients themselves, are going to make decisions related to the health care which affects them, rather than the accountants or insurance agents.

Basically, that is what this legislation is about. There are a number of guarantees and protections included in the Patients' Bill of Rights, which I have addressed on other occasions and which I, again, will mention this morning.

Every day we fail to take action on this legislation, we see what has hap-

pened in this country over the last 2 years; the patients suffer, while our Republican leadership refuses to schedule this particular legislation.

During the 2 years that we have been blocked, effectively, from a Patients' Bill of Rights, HMO abuses have caused some 33 million patients difficulty in getting specialty referrals, delayed needed medical care for some 33 million patients, forced some 23 million patients to change their doctors, forced 14 million patients to change medications, denied payments for emergency services to 11 million patients—those are patients who use the emergency room, who felt they had a medical emergency but were denied the coverage from their HMO and had to pay for it out of their own pocket—and caused unnecessary suffering and financial loss and frustration for millions more.

Over these last days, as we did last year, we have pointed out not only numbers but also in real terms what is happening to families all across this country. For those supporting a Patients' Bill of Rights, which is the legislation introduced by Senator DASCHLE, he has stated—and others who support it have stated—that we are ready, willing and able to enter into time agreements, but we want to have this measure scheduled. We ought to be able to permit the Senate to vote on these measures. They are enormously important, as we have been reminded in the past days by my colleagues and others.

We spent 5 days on legislation protecting various computer companies in this country from the potential of a Y2K glitch. We believe that we would not even need that amount of time to debate legislation that will provide protections for families, for parents, for loved ones, for husbands and wives, and particularly for children. We make the case—I do today—that it is time for the Congress to act to protect the patients against the abuses of managed care.

Patients and doctors should make the medical decisions, not the insurance company accountants. Too often, managed care is mismanaged care. Members of the Senate know it. Doctors, nurses and other health care professionals know it. The American people know it. It is time for the Republican leadership to stop protecting the insurance company profits and start protecting patients.

I point out that we have more than 200 organizations that support our legislation. It isn't that we just want to advance some proposal that has been assembled by the members of our party; there are those in the other party, including Dr. GANSKE, a doctor who is a Republican, and others who support our proposal. But more than 200 organizations representing the medical profession—the nurses, the doctors, the consumers, those who have