

also deferred to others. Senator MACK needed to speak, and others. I understand that. I will finish up. I said that several times, I think, to my colleague.

On a Sunday morning Paul Doramus, recently appointed director of the state agency that is responsible for juvenile justice institutions, visited the Central Arkansas Observation and Assessment Center. He heard a boy sobbing: "Mister, get me out of here, I want my mother." Doramus discovered a 13-year-old boy in an isolation cell, "sobbing so hard he could hardly speak." The boy had been caught in a stolen car and was arrested for theft of property. At the institution he had been disruptive, and staff placed him in isolation. "As I attempted to talk with him, his calls for help just grew louder," Doramus said. The boy's next words jarred Doramus even more. "Jesus doesn't love me anymore for what I did." Doramus held the boy's hands through the cell bars. "That's not true, partner," he assured him. "He does."

"All I could think of was my two kids who were at home, who got the hugs and got the love and got the support," Doramus said. "I thought, God forgive us all. How could we allow kids to live in an environment like this?" Little Rock, Arkansas, June 1998.

This is from an Amnesty International report that came out this past year, November 1998.

Mr. President, I have seen these conditions in these facilities. I will have a number of amendments dealing with domestic violence, dealing with mental health and juvenile justice that I have been working on for the past year, dealing with the whole question of how we can get more support for kids before they get into trouble.

I look forward to this debate, and I hope before it is all over we will have a balanced piece of legislation. I am sorry for being so sharp in my response to my colleague from Montana, but when I read from such a report—and these are children's lives—I just don't like to be interrupted.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Montana.

(The remarks of Mr. BAUCUS pertaining to the introduction of legislation are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate now stands in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

There being no objection, at 12:49 p.m., the Senate recessed until 2:16 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. INHOFE).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be permitted to speak as if in

morning business for up to 5 minutes, and that following their remarks there be a quorum call: Senator ROTH, Senator JEFFORDS, and Senator KENNEDY.

Mr. LEAHY. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, I want to accommodate the Senator from Delaware. Could we also say that following that quorum call the distinguished Senator from Virginia, Mr. ROBB, be recognized to discuss an amendment? We will not introduce the amendment, of course, unless the chairman of the Judiciary Committee is here.

Mr. ROTH. As if in morning business.

Mr. LEAHY. Certainly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

THE WORK INCENTIVES IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, in January, I joined Senators MOYNIHAN, JEFFORDS, and KENNEDY to introduce S. 331, the Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. This legislation has a simple objective—to help people with disabilities go to work if they want to go to work, without fear of losing their health insurance lifeline.

S. 331 creates two new Medicaid options for States to make it possible for people with disabilities who choose to work to do so without jeopardizing health insurance access. The bill also extends Medicare part A coverage for a 10-year trial period for individuals on SSDI who return to work.

In addition to these health coverage innovations, the bill provides a user-friendly, public-private approach to job placement. Because of a new, innovative payment system, vocational rehabilitation agencies will be rewarded for helping people remain on the job.

Mr. President, this combination of health care and job assistance will help disabled Americans succeed in the workplace.

Tremendous progress has been made on many fronts in the 8 years following the passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act. However, there are still serious obstacles standing in the way of employment for individuals with disabilities.

Unfortunately, federal programs for individuals with disabilities too often discourage work. The most important barrier to employment identified by disabled individuals is the fear of losing health insurance.

The unemployment rate among working-age adults with severe disabilities is nearly 75 percent. Many of these individuals would prefer to be working and paying taxes. Unfortunately, Mr. President, the simple fact is that people with disabilities are often presented with a catch-22 between working and losing their Medicaid or Medicare. This is a choice that no one should have to make.

But even modest earnings can result in a loss of eligibility for Medicaid or Medicare, and disabled individuals cannot surrender their insurance access without jeopardizing their health.

Today, more than 7.5 million disabled Americans receive cash benefits from SSI and SSDI. Disability benefit spending for these two programs totals \$73 billion a year. If only 1 percent—or 75,000—of these SSI and SSDI beneficiaries were to become employed, federal savings in disability benefits would total \$3.5 billion over the workforce of the beneficiaries.

Mr. President, income tax day, April 15, is still fresh in our minds. It is not very often, especially at this time of year, that we hear from millions of Americans eager to become taxpayers. I say we should welcome Americans with disabilities into the ranks of tax-paying citizens.

In my own State of Delaware, experts on disability policy have made their support for S. 331 clear. Larry Henderson, Chair of Delaware's Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, testified in support of S. 331 at a Finance Committee hearing. He supports S. 331 "because it does not penalize persons with disabilities for working in that it allows for continued access to health care."

For this reason, more than 100 national groups have endorsed the bill, representing veterans, people with disabilities, health care providers, and insurers.

Mr. President, on March 4, the Finance Committee marked up and passed S. 331 by a vote of 16 to 2. S. 331 was the first health care bill passed out of our committee this year, and I appreciate the spirit of bipartisan cooperation that made our vote possible.

The strong support for S. 331 shown by our committee is also reflected in the full Senate. Mr. President, a total of 75 Senators now sponsor S. 331. Let me say that again—75 Senators have signed on to S. 331. That would be a remarkable total for any bill, let alone a health care proposal.

I think S. 331 has been so popular on both sides of the aisle because it is all about helping disabled Americans work if that is what they want to do. It is about helping people reach their potential. It is not about big government—it is about getting government out of the way of individual commitment and creativity.

Through my work on S. 331, it has become vividly clear to me that we are all just one tragedy away from confronting disability in our own families.

Unfortunately, we cannot prevent all disabilities. But we can prevent making disabled individuals choose between health care and employment.

It is time now to act. Mr. President, together with Senators MOYNIHAN, JEFFORDS, and KENNEDY, I have asked that S. 331 be scheduled for a vote before