

He says the bill we are debating, S. 25, and also this new bill, S. 2123, which reflects the compromise he and Congressman MILLER from California worked out, would actually improve the position of Western States that are concerned that perhaps this bill gives even more money to purchase land because, in fact, any administration can do that, and right now some administrations have done it without much oversight from Congress.

This bill provides the proper partnership and balance between the administration and Congress. This bill gives the appropriators and the authorizing committee the authority and encourages them to actually make the decisions about what lands will be purchased. In addition, what I think is so right about what Chairman DON YOUNG says, is that our environmental efforts need to be about much more than just acquiring more land; we have to take care of the land we already own. I think the Chair would agree with that. That is what the bill does.

I reach out to my colleagues from Western States, many of whom have supported this effort, many of whom have other concerns and have hesitated so far with their endorsement, to ask them to really look at western values within the Conservation and Reinvestment Act piece that is being circulated and really look at what an improvement this bill offers over the current status quo.

My last point is actually a word to the White House and to the President, first to thank the President for his leadership in lands legacy. He has a tremendous idea about trying to leave a great legacy. Of course, he has done many good things in his time as President for these 8 years. He has been a leader in the environmental effort. I so appreciate that; many of us do.

I thank him for laying down a mark on lands legacy but urge him to consider that this piece of legislation is permanent in nature. It is broader than the vision he has outlined. And it is an improvement. It brings in the East and the West, the North and the South. It helps urban areas and rural areas because we have added urban parks and historic preservation. There have been some great improvements demonstrated through the development of this piece of legislation.

I thank him for his great leadership, acknowledge the work of many people in the White House, but urge them to embrace the concept that is now supported by over 300 Members in the House. We have a growing number of Members in the Senate to pass this bill now.

Some people think we can't afford it. If we can't afford to take \$2 billion, which our bill is calling for, out of arguably a \$3 trillion surplus—if you want to take Social Security completely off the plate, which I want to

do, and give very conservative estimates, it leaves us with about \$800 billion to allocate. We can do it through some tax cuts, which I support, reasonable and targeted. We can do strategic investments in education. But there is one investment I know, besides education, the American people want us to make. That is preserving land that is lost every hour and every minute, preserving parks for these children, preserving opportunities to hunt and fish, to take your grandchildren to the pond outside of your farm or down the road or across the State line to spend a weekend in the woods.

I am positive people in Louisiana and all over America want us to act now. Ten years is too late. Next year is too late. My question is, if we can't afford to take this money now, which in my opinion should not be going into the Federal Treasury because it is taxes from a resource that is depleting—we should not be using it in our operating expenses anyway because one day, probably in my lifetime, these oil and gas wells will be dried up—why do we not take this opportunity in the dawn of this new century to take some of this money and give it back to our kids and our grandkids in ways that are responsible and meaningful and for something that is permanent.

In conclusion, I know many people will thank us for passing this bill, but the most important group will be our grandchildren. We will be proud that we did it.

I look forward to working with all of my colleagues, Republican and Democrat, to get this bill out of committee, passed on the floor, and be there for the signing when the President will enthusiastically embrace what we have done to improve his lands legacy approach to provide security for Western Senators, to provide urban help to our urban areas, and to do it in a way that is very fair to all parts of the country.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print a document in the RECORD entitled "Western Values Within the Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999."

There being no objection, the document was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

WESTERN VALUES WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 1999 (CARA)

BACKGROUND

For decades, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has made \$900 million available for state and federal land acquisition. State acquisitions are driven by a state planning process and states and local governments are responsible for their own plans and receive direct funding (matched 50/50) based upon a formula. Since fiscal year 1995, the states have not received funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

For federal acquisitions, any amount (up to \$900 million) may be spent on Federal land acquisition as appropriated through the annual Congressional appropriations process. There are virtually no restrictions with this

process and almost \$300 million has been historically appropriated to purchase new federal lands. In a recent year, nearly \$700 million was used to buy private lands.

HOW DOES CARA CHANGE THIS PROCESS TO PROTECT WESTERN VALUES?

1. By making permanent and dividing (between the state and federal portions) the \$900 million within the Land and Water Conservation Fund, we require the federal government to share half of the LWCF funds with the states to be spent on locally selected projects.

2. Each year the Administration must transmit a list to Congress requesting specific approval for each tract of land to be acquired.

3. Congress must specifically approve each project.

4. The Administration must seek to consolidate federal land holdings in states with checkerboard Federal land ownership patterns.

5. The Administration must seek to use exchanges and conservation easements as an alternative to acquisition.

6. The Administration must notify Congress (within the annual request required by CARA) if tracts are identified for acquisition from non-willing sellers.

7. Transactions will be carried out with willing sellers, because CARA prohibits the government from using adverse condemnation to acquire lands—unless specifically authorized by Congress.

8. The Administration must demonstrate, to Congress, its authority to carry out the federal acquisition.

9. 30 days after the submission of the LWCF acquisition request (new CARA requirement), the Congressional representatives, the Governor, and local government official must be notified.

10. 30 days after the submission of the LWCF acquisition request (new CARA requirement), the local public must be notified in a newspaper that is widely distributed to the area in which the proposed acquisition is to take place.

11. Prior to the federal purchase of lands, all actions required under Federal law must be completed.

12. Prior to the federal purchase of lands, a copy of the final NEPA documents must be given to Congress and the Congressional representatives, the Governor, and local government officials must be notified that the environment work is complete and the documents are available.

13. CARA requires just compensation for the taking of private property, as provided within the Constitution.

14. CARA protects State water rights.

15. CARA provides \$200 million annually for maintenance.

16. CARA provides up to \$200 million in additional funding for PILT and Refuge Revenue Sharing.

17. CARA will provide the necessary funds to reduce the \$10 billion backlog of willing sellers stuck within an inholding.

18. Restricts the federal governments regulatory ability over all private lands.

19. CARA prohibits funding for wildlife law enforcement.

20. If revenues for CARA fall, all titles and programs are reduced proportionally.

BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the extremely generous and

thoughtful gift for the education of our nation's children that was announced today by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Although relatively young, the Foundation already has a track record of making significant contributions for the sharing of new technologies and improving the educational opportunities of all our children. For example, in 1999, Bill and Melinda Gates provided \$1 billion to establish the Gates Millennium Scholars program, which will provide scholarships for academically talented minority students who would otherwise not have the financial resources to attend college.

Today, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will announce a new gift of approximately \$350 million, and more than \$200 million of this gift will be directed to Washington state schools and districts. This gift is comprised of a series of grants that are designed to raise academic standards and help all students meet those standards.

The grants are broken into two elements. The first is a series of grants for the development state, district, school and classroom leadership. Our educators are doing an outstanding job teaching our children. This funding, however, will give our teachers even more support and enhance their education which will in turn improve the education of our students. This series of grants consists of \$100 million for state challenge grants for Leadership Development, \$45 million for the Teacher Leadership Project, and \$25 million for national teacher training and teacher quality initiatives.

The second series of grants will encourage the development of model schools and districts. Throughout our state, educators and school administrators have hundreds of innovative and creative ideas to improve education. With this funding, educators can turn their ideas into reality and implement new solutions and ways to teach. This series of grants consist of the \$30 million Washington State School Grant Program which will serve approximately 140 schools, and the \$150 million School District Grant Program which includes \$50 million for 10–11 districts in Washington State.

Finally, the Foundation is providing the Seattle School District with a \$26 million grant that will assist the district in its use of technology to help students meet Washington state's challenging academic standards.

I'm sure my colleagues join me in thanking Bill and Melinda Gates for their significant and considerate contribution to education. I know that current and future generations of students will benefit greatly from this gift. The education of our children is the key to the success of our country and the Gateses have given all of our students an even greater chance of succeeding.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to share with my colleagues some great education news for schools in Washington state and around the country. Today, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced a nationwide commitment to provide \$350 million over three years to help students succeed in the classroom.

As a former educator in Washington state, I'm especially pleased that more than \$200 million dollars will go to Washington state classrooms. This generous contribution will put money where we know it will make a difference: helping all students achieve by developing strong leadership skills in our teachers and administrators.

As we work here in the Senate on our national education policy, today's announcement is a reminder that educating our children is a team effort—and there are important roles for federal, state, and local officials, as well as businesses, nonprofit organizations, and individuals.

For years, the people I represent have seen first-hand the generosity and sense of community that Bill and Melinda Gates possess. Their foundation has worked to vaccinate poor children against diseases, to bring computers to libraries across the country, and to provide scholarships to talented minority students. We in Washington state have known about it since the beginning, and I'm proud that today, the whole nation gets to see it—and benefit from it.

I couldn't be more proud of the Gates Foundation on this special occasion and can't wait to see the many ways this will improve education for millions of students.

As we begin our work to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, I hope that this major announcement serves to remind us that local school districts—on their own—don't have all the resources they need. Individuals have a role to play as mentors, volunteers and coaches. Charitable foundations have a role to play, and the federal government also has a role to play.

I hope the Senate will follow the important and thoughtful example set by the Gates Foundation to do our best to give all students the resources and the tools they need to reach their potential.

RECOGNITION OF THE "FROM THE TOP" PROGRAM

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I would like to announce the winner of my 33rd Innovation in Education Award. This award goes to a national group sponsored by Boston Public Radio titled "From the Top." I learned about this program when I attended a "From the Top" performance in Spokane on January 29th. Two students from Washington state, Stephen Beus of Othello

and Justin Mackewich of Vancouver, participated in the concert and I was amazed by their technique and their immense talent. I was delighted to see such outstanding students excelling in the arts and am pleased to award Stephen and Justin and recognize this exceptional program.

Both Stephen and Justin are very gifted musicians. I was amazed by Stephen's skill at the piano and the Four Seasons Quartet that Justin played in was astounding. I hope to attend more of their concerts in the future.

"From the Top" consists of a series of public radio performances, taped in front of live audiences. These performances have been given across the country in places like Boston, New York City, Sarasota, Florida, and St. Paul, Minnesota. The concept for "From the Top" is to highlight the performances of exceptional, pre-college age, classical musicians. Indeed, their performances make a "From the Top" concert a remarkable experience.

An additional positive impact of "From the Top" is that it provides an arena for people of all ages to enjoy classical music. In today's modern world, we must take the time to enjoy the classics and encourage our youth to value the great symphonies and music from the past. "From the Top" is an excellent source for all ages and walks of life to learn more about classical music.

Each week, I give an "Innovation in Education" Award to individuals or groups within the education system who make outstanding contributions to the education of our children. I believe that "From the Top" gives our students exposure to the arts that provides an invaluable enrichment to any child's upbringing. I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing the great contributions of "From the Top".

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, in honor of Leap Day, which was yesterday, I am going to vary my regular format.

It is estimated that 200,000 people in the United States were born on February 29th. While these individuals may not share their birthdays with their families and loved ones every year, they do share—every year—in the less than desirable Federal debt like the rest of us.

Since 1970, the Federal debt has leapt remarkably—reaching \$5,735,333,348,132.58 (Five trillion, seven hundred thirty-five billion, three hundred thirty-three million, three hundred forty-eight thousand, one hundred thirty-two dollars and fifty-eight cents) at the close of business yesterday, February 29, 2000.

The previous Leap Day, February 29, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,016,041,000,000 (Five trillion, sixteen billion, forty-one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$700