

hearings and to make sure that prosecutors have the time and resources to be in regular contact with them. An amendment to the Constitution requiring such actions would do little to remedy such neglect. Indeed, unless followed by better funding, the amendment might put even more strain on prosecutors' time and budgets, making them more reluctant to take on difficult cases. That would work decidedly in the favor of criminals, not society.

Many prosecutors and victims' groups have concerns about the potential for unintended harm from the amendment. Their arguments make enormous sense. During the past two decades, America has begun to address its crime problem more seriously. From local offices to the federal government, prosecutors and lawmakers are doing better in addressing the needs of victims and society. The step-by-step approach is showing results in reduced crime. Methodical, painstaking improvements should be strengthened, rather than being shunted aside in favor of a constitutional amendment that, at best, promises more than it would deliver.

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY 2000

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, on Friday, April 28, 2000, we remembered and honored the sacrifices of the men and women across the years who have lost their lives on the job. We also marked the 30th anniversary of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which has done so much to reduce such casualties by improving conditions in the workplace for employees across the country. On this day, we renewed our commitment to fair and safe working conditions for every American.

The progress that we have made over the past 30 years is remarkable. In 1970, the year the Occupational Safety and Health Act was signed into law, 13,800 workers died on the job. Since then, workplace fatality rates have fallen by 74 percent. Over 200,000 lives have been saved. Injury rates have fallen by more than a third.

In observance of this important day, we must also remember the lives and the families that have been irrevocably changed by workplace injuries and illnesses. Despite the progress, 154 people still lose their lives on the job on the average day. Last year in Massachusetts, 91 workers died on the job—more than double the number in 1998. Currently, it is estimated that 1,000 deaths a year result from work-related illnesses, and 1,200 workers a year are diagnosed with cancer caused by their jobs. Clearly, those high numbers are unacceptable.

As the global economy continues to expand and change the new workplace, new challenges are created for ensuring adequate safety protections. The modern workplace is being restructured by downsizing staff, larger output quotas, mandatory overtime, and job consolidation. This restructuring creates new pressures on workers to be more productive in the name of efficiency and competitiveness. New technologies in the workplace make it easier to do jobs

faster, but they pose new hazards as well.

For ten years, workers have been struggling to achieve a workplace free from ergonomic injuries and illnesses. Since 1990, Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole announced the Department of Labor's commitment to issuing an ergonomics standard, more than 6 million workers have suffered serious job injuries from these hazards. Each year, 650,000 workers lose a day or more of work because of ergonomic injuries, costing businesses \$15–20 billion per year.

Ursula Stafford, 24 years old, worked as a paraprofessional for the New York City school district. She was injured assisting a 250-pound wheelchair-bound student. She received no training on how to lift the student, nor did her employer provide any lifting equipment. After two days on the job, she suffered a herniated disc and spasms in her neck. As a result of her injuries, her doctor told her that she may not be able to have children, because her back may not be able to support the weight.

Charley Richardson, a shipfitter at General Dynamics in Quincy, Massachusetts, sustained a career-ending back injury when he was ordered to install a 75-pound piece of steel to reinforce a deck. Although he continued to try to work, he found that on many days, he could not endure the pain of lifting and using heavy tools. For years afterwards, his injury prevented him from participating in basic activities. The loss that hurt Charley the most was having to tell his grandchildren they could not sit on his lap for more than a couple of minutes, because it was too painful. To this day, he cannot sit for long without pain.

OSHA has proposed an ergonomics standard to protect workers from these debilitating injuries. Yet in spite of the costs to employers and to workers and their families, industry has launched an all-out, no-holds-barred effort to prevent OSHA from issuing this important standard. A stronger standard would go a long way to reducing this leading cause of injury.

Ergonomics programs have been shown to make a difference in reducing the number of injuries that occur on the job. Johns Hopkins University initiated a program which significantly reduced the rate of such injuries by 80 percent over seven years. A poultry processor's program lowered the incidence of workers' compensation claims by 20 percent. A program by Intel Corporation produced a savings of more than \$10 million.

Hopefully, after this long battle, a national ergonomics standard will finally be put in place this year. If so, it will be the most significant workplace safety protection in the 30 years since OSHA became law. The ergonomic standard will be a landmark achievement in improving safety and health

for all workers in America. May this Workers Memorial Day serve as a monument to the progress we are making, and as a constant reminder of our obligation to do more, much more, to achieve the great goal we share.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business Friday, April 28, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,685,108,228,594.76 (Five trillion, six hundred eighty-five billion, one hundred eight million, two hundred twenty-eight thousand, five hundred ninety-four dollars and seventy-six cents).

One year ago, April 26, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,598,230,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred ninety-eight billion, two hundred thirty million).

Five years ago, April 28, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,852,327,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred fifty-two billion, three hundred twenty-seven million).

Ten years ago, April 28, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,059,578,000,000 (Three trillion, fifty-nine billion, five hundred seventy-eight million).

Twenty-five years ago, April 28, 1975, the Federal debt stood at \$515,176,000,000 (Five hundred fifteen billion, one hundred seventy-six million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,169,932,228,594.76 (Five trillion, one hundred sixty-nine billion, nine hundred thirty-two million, two hundred twenty-eight thousand, five hundred ninety-four dollars and seventy-six cents) during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING TOP GEORGIA YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

• Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate and honor two young Georgia students who have achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in their communities. Shelarese Ruffin of Atlanta and Sagen Woolery of Warner Robins have just been named State Honorees in The 2000 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program, an annual honor conferred on only one high school student and one middle-level student in each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Ms. Shelarese Ruffin is being recognized for her efforts in developing an intervention program that targets at-risk teens. The program is designed to help further educate and discipline teens in overcoming drug and behavioral problems. Mr. Sagen Woolery is being honored for volunteering his time and creating "The Kid's Kitchen," a soup kitchen for needy children and their families which is fully operated by kids between the ages of 8–12.