

stay within the budget caps, I also firmly believe that funding for R&D should be allowed to grow in fiscal year 2001 and beyond.

As a result of the current fiscal environment in Congress and the desire to utilize the surplus prudently, I am confident that investing in basic R&D, and in turn the technological innovation of the future, is a proper use of the federal taxpayers dollars. This pivotal need for a resurgence in basic R&D investments is evident when we further consider our nation's increased dependency on technology and the global competition that threatens our sustained leadership position. R&D drives the innovation process, which in turn drives the U.S. economy. Now is not the time to turn our backs on the nation's future prosperity.

Mr. President, I want to thank the Council on Competitiveness again for its poignant statement and strongly encourage each of my colleagues to consider its message as we continue to make budgeting decisions this year.

PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK 2000

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today during Public Service Recognition Week 2000 to encourage my colleagues to take a moment to honor the many selfless actions and outstanding accomplishments of our nation's state, local, and Federal public servants. As the ranking member on the Senate Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services, with direct jurisdiction over the Federal civil service, I take particular pride in honoring the millions of dedicated men and women who work around the clock on our behalf.

Their responsibilities are as varied as the challenges presented by their jobs. Our armed forces and civilian defense workers keep us out of harms' way—both domestically and abroad—our public school teachers instruct our children, and the U.S. Postal Service provides delivery to every address in the nation. Our public servants safeguard our food supplies; support our social services infrastructure, oversee and protect our economy; and so much more. These men and women are the backbone of what makes America great. We often take them for granted and in certain instances subject them to scorn and ridicule. With little recognition from the public they serve, these employees are unwavering in their dedication, honor, purpose, and ability to serve their cities, counties, states, and Federal Government.

I am heartened that so many school districts are fostering public service by requiring their students to serve as volunteers prior to graduating high school. As a former school teacher and administrator, I believe that voluntary service is useful and appropriate in de-

veloping a sense of community and fellowship, and I am hopeful that as each generation matures it will see the value of continuing their public service by working in state, local, or Federal Government. However, I am aware that Congress must play a role in supporting public service.

At a Governmental Affairs Committee hearing this week on the effectiveness of Federal employee incentive programs it became evident that the lack of sufficient funds to support viable and much-needed compensation, recognition, and incentives program for Federal employees was hampering efforts to recruit, retain, and relocate Federal workers.

Federal agencies, if given adequate funding, would be better positioned to utilize incentive programs that are already available. Flattened budgets and the pressure to reallocate limited resources do not benefit Federal employees or the ultimate end-user: the American taxpayer.

Our Nation's Federal civil servants have given much to their country, especially when Congress was balancing the budget during times of crunching deficits. Now that the country is enjoying record-breaking surpluses, I believe Federal employees should be rewarded for their contributions, and I will continue to push for realistic budgets and salaries for Federal agencies and their employees.

I proudly join all public service workers in observance of the 16th annual Public Service Recognition Week, and I heartily salute the past accomplishments, outstanding service, and future contribution that these outstanding men and women make to our Nation's greatness.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today to spotlight the significant achievements of all those who make up our Nation's public workforce.

This week, from May 1st to the 7th, is Public Service Recognition Week, organized by the Public Employees Roundtable. The Public Employees Roundtable was formed in 1982 as a nonpartisan coalition of management and professional associations representing approximately one million public employees and retirees. The mission of the Roundtable is to educate the American people about the numerous ways public employees enrich the quality of life throughout our Nation and advance the country's national interests around the world.

I am indeed proud to join the Public Employees Roundtable in their ongoing efforts to bring special attention to the dedicated individuals who have chosen public service as a career. While we should all appreciate the efforts of public employees throughout the year, this week-long celebration is an invaluable opportunity to honor their contributions and learn about the vast array of programs and services public employ-

ees provide every day. For four days, starting today, a wide variety of organizations will sponsor exhibits on the Mall to spotlight the work public employees perform. This year, among the numerous agencies represented, will be the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps; and the Social Security Administration.

These exhibits sponsored by civilian and Department of Defense agencies will showcase the amazing variety of public employees that make ours the greatest Nation in the world—at the Federal, state, and local government levels. This year, I was also pleased to join with several of my House and Senate colleagues in circulating to every Congressional office a videotape entitled "Salute to Excellence," produced by the Public Employees Roundtable. In a brief 10 minutes, the video clearly demonstrates that our Nation's public servants are hard-working individuals who perform vital work for the country each and every day.

The total impact of the work of public employees is impossible to measure. Without them, senior citizens would wait in vain for Social Security checks, cities would not have the funds and assistance to improve their highways, and our entrepreneurs could not protect their new inventions. In short, all of our citizens would suffer.

Initiatives to improve government services have encouraged the development of creative solutions and programs to better serve our citizens. Several of these innovative ideas were recognized at the "Breakfast of Champions" held this Monday honoring winners of the 2000 Public Service Excellence Awards. These honorees—and public employees everywhere—are finding ways to do their work better, more professionally, and in a way that meets the community's needs.

As I have said on many occasions, I believe very much that the United States will only continue to be a first-rate country if we have first-class public servants. Our Nation is experiencing unprecedented growth and unemployment rates, and has unquestionably benefited from the many achievements of Federal employees. In setting aside this week to acknowledge our Nation's public servants, we all have an opportunity to give these employees the thanks and recognition they so greatly deserve. I am very pleased to extend my appreciation to such a worthy and committed group of men and women and encourage them to continue in their efforts on behalf of all Americans.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, May 3, 2000, the Federal debt stood