To apply for health care, veterans can now fill out and submit an easy-to-follow internet-based application form, which is automatically electronically mailed to the VA health care facility selected by the veteran. VA employees register the data, print the form and mail it back to the veteran for signature. Veterans can also print out the completed form and mail it to a VA health care facility themselves.

Since 1996, when all honorably discharged veterans became eligible to enroll for VA health care, more than a half-million additional veterans have done so. Why? Every VA patient now has a primary care provider and team. VA has computerized mail-out pharmacy services that ensure the timely delivery of drugs to patients. VA has instituted aggressive performance measures that have led to implementation of the best practices of government and private sector health care. On average, VA medical facilities now receive higher accreditation scores than do private sector facilities.

While this transformation was taking place, VA has become industry leader in safe areas as patient safety, surgical quality assessment, the computerization of medical records, telehealth, preventive screenings and immunizations.

There have been no big wars lately, no long lines of troops coming home, no welcoming parades necessary. As these events and the years that he landed so far away from us. It might be only human to become complacent about those who not so long ago left their families, their schools, their jobs, and the security of their lives, because the country asked. They now need our help, as will future generations of servicemen and women, but platitudes on Veterans Day and Memorial Day will not bring them home. Words alone will not mend broken spirits and cannot heal broken bodies. The best possible care—the type VA provides as part of a comprehensive system of benefits—is the most appropriate honor we can bestow on veterans.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, July 16, 2001, the Federal debt stood at $5,709,313,725,685.43, five trillion, seven hundred nine billion, six hundred eighty-three million, six hundred eighteen dollars and forty-three cents.

Five years ago, July 16, 1996, the Federal debt stood at $4,158,430,000,000, five trillion, one hundred fifty-eight billion, four hundred thirty million.

Ten years ago, July 16, 1991, the Federal debt stood at $3,154,429,000,000, three trillion, five hundred forty-one billion, four hundred twenty-nine million.

Fifteen years ago, July 16, 1986, the Federal debt stood at $2,069,283,000,000, two trillion, sixty-nine billion, two hundred eighty-three million.

Twenty-five years ago, July 16, 1976, the Federal debt stood at $2,069,283,000,000, two trillion, sixty-nine billion, two hundred eighty-three million.

Twenty-five years ago, July 16, 1976, the Federal debt stood at $1,618,625,000,000, six hundred eighteen billion, six hundred twenty-five million, which reflects a debt increase of more than $5 trillion, $5,000,688,725,685.43, five trillion, ninety billion, six hundred eighty-eight million,

\[\text{lion, seven hundred twenty-five thousand, six hundred eighty-five dollars and forty-three cents during the past 25 years.}\]

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

**PRAISE FOR GEORGIA’S KWAME BROWN ON BEING NBA’S NUMBER ONE DRAFT**

- Mr. MILLER. Mr. President, every one of us has a life story. Every person is a book, and I would like to tell you about one young man from the state of Georgia who is beginning a new chapter in his.

Kwame Brown has known adversity since the age of 5, when his parents split, and he began to shelter with his mother and siblings for 10 months. With the help of relatives, Kwame and his family got out of that shelter and things got better—but not by much. Kwame’s mother, Joyce, raised him and his seven siblings by herself in Brunswick, GA, supporting the family by cleaning hotel rooms.

That job ended in 1993 when a back injury and other health problems left Ms. Brown unable to work. Since then, the family has scraped by on a monthly disability check and a few extra dollars from babysitting. Their mode of transportation: a bicycle. Such adversity would break most families, but not Kwame Brown’s family.

With the help of a church mentor, Kwame and his siblings became focused and set goals for themselves. Kwame decided he wanted to be a better student and a better basketball player. Through his faith and many hours of hard work, Kwame improved so much that he was named to a brand new home. Kwame is not only a talented athlete, but also humble, wise and mature beyond his years. I look forward to this new chapter in Kwame’s life with great anticipation. I know his will be a fascinating story with a wonderful ending.

**TRIBUTE TO JAMES LAKE**

- Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to James Lake upon the occasion of his completion in June of a tenure as the President of the American Nuclear Society for the 2000/2001 year. The American Nuclear Society is an international scientific and educational organization established in 1954. Its membership now has approximately 11,000 engineers, scientists, administrators, and educators representing over 1,500 corporations, educational institutions, and government agencies.

The work of nuclear engineers and scientists is especially relevant to meeting the increasing need of the Nation for electricity. Around the United States, there is a growing public interest in new nuclear plants which offer an economical, safe and environmentally-friendly alternative for the generation of electricity. The development of nuclear professionals is a valuable service for the Nation that advances our energy security and economic well-being.

Jim Lake’s service as the President of the American Nuclear Society this year has helped to stimulate the interest in new nuclear generation which has stemmed from energy shortages in California and higher energy prices in many areas. He has crossed the Nation many times this year to meet with nuclear professionals, industry executives, public servants, educators and students to seek their views and ideas on an expanding role for nuclear energy in the Nation’s energy supply. As he completes his term as ANS President, Jim Lake has represented the professionals of the United States in many forums overseas, and has brought home a broad perspective on nuclear energy’s role in a balanced energy portfolio.