

consider our perspective as legislators. We have passed legislation to provide health care and economic security to our Nation's veterans and yet we often hear from constituents who are not aware of the benefits and services the VA provides.

One of the most important benefits the VA provides is comprehensive health care, including low-cost prescription medications. Unfortunately, many veterans believe they have to be disabled or poor to enroll in the VA health care system. The reality is that any honorably discharged veteran can enroll in VA health care.

Let me tell you about a message recently posted on the Web site of Seniors USA. The message is from Art Mazer, who is the Coordinator for the Gray Panthers of Greater Boston. Mr. Mazer writes that he has just enrolled in the VA health care system and will now receive his medications for just \$2 per month from the VA pharmacy. Mr. Mazer, who happened to find out about these pharmacy benefits through an email newsletter of the Social Security Administration, refers to the prescription drug benefits provided by the VA as "one of the best kept secrets" in the government. Although I applaud the Social Security Administration for its informative newsletter and I am glad Mr. Mazer is sharing the information with other seniors, I am concerned that VA health care is being described on an Internet site for seniors as one of the best kept secrets of the government.

In some ways, it is appropriate that Mr. Mazer found out about VA benefits from the Social Security Administration. Remarkably, two out of every five veterans receive Social Security. Today, more than nine million veterans are on the Social Security rolls. Over the next several years, we will see millions of Vietnam Era veterans being brought into Social Security's disability and retirement programs.

The Social Security Administration has one of the most extensive systems of public communication in our government. Each year, this Agency sends out tens of millions of notices to its beneficiaries. These notices inform the public about Social Security, Medicare, and other vital government programs. Every workday, 100,000 citizens visit the Social Security Administration's 1,300 field offices around the country. The primary role of field office employees is to administer the Social Security programs, but we know from our disabled and elderly constituents that it is often a Social Security employee who tells them about a program to help pay their Medicare bills or a program to help them meet their food expenses. Simply put, the Social Security Administration is on the front lines in our battle to alleviate poverty among our disabled and elderly citizens.

The Resolution I am submitting today calls on the Secretary of Vet-

erans Affairs to request assistance from the Commissioner of Social Security in fulfilling the Secretary's mandate to provide outreach to veterans and their dependents. The Resolution outlines four initiatives, but let me talk briefly about just one.

Each year the Social Security Administration mails 45 million cost-of-living adjustment notices to its beneficiaries. The primary purpose of these COLA notices is to tell beneficiaries how much their benefits will increase. However, the Social Security Administration has used a portion of these notices in the past to provide information on government health care programs, such as Medicare. It is my hope that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs will request that a portion of these COLA notices include information on the VA health care system, including its provision of low-cost prescription drugs. The VA, to its credit, has developed a Health Benefits Hotline, 1-877-222-VETS, so that veterans can find out about and enroll in VA health care. The COLA notices are an effective way to publicize this Hotline. We know that it requires time to prepare for these outreach initiatives, but I am hopeful that this initiative could be implemented for the December 2002 COLA notices. This gives the Secretary over a year to work with the Social Security Administration to implement the initiative.

The initiatives outlined in this Resolution are not costly or intrusive because they build on the already-existing capabilities of the Federal Government. And yet, these initiatives will inform millions of veterans and their dependents about VA programs.

The current Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Anthony J. Principi, is a combat-decorated veteran. I know he is deeply committed to serving veterans and their families. So, today, through this Resolution, I am asking him to take some practical steps to ensure that our veterans and their families are fully informed about benefits and services provided by the VA. I feel sure that the Social Security Administration, an Agency with a well-earned reputation for serving the disabled and the elderly, will respond favorably to a request for assistance by Secretary Principi.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 153—RECOGNIZING THE ENDURING CONTRIBUTIONS, HEROIC ACHIEVEMENTS, AND DEDICATED WORK OF SHIRLEY ANITA CHISHOLM**

Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. DODD, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 153

Whereas Shirley Anita Chisholm has devoted her life to public service;

Whereas Shirley Anita Chisholm served in the New York State Assembly from 1964 to 1968;

Whereas Shirley Anita Chisholm became the first African-American woman to be elected to Congress in 1968;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm was a fierce critic of the seniority system in Congress, protested her assignment in 1969 to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, and won reassignment to a committee of the House of Representatives on which she could better serve her inner-city district in Brooklyn, New York;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm served as a Member of Congress from 1968 until 1983;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm proposed legislation to increase funding for child care facilities in order to allow such facilities to extend their hours of operation and provide services to both middle-class and low-income families;

Whereas in 1972 Congresswoman Chisholm became the first African-American and the first woman to be a candidate for the nomination of the Democratic Party for the office of President;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm campaigned in the primaries of 12 States, won 28 delegates, and received 152 first ballot votes at the national convention for the nomination of the Democratic Party for the office of President;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm has fought throughout her life for fundamental rights for women, children, seniors, African-Americans, Hispanics, and other minority groups;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm has been a committed advocate for many progressive causes, including improving education, ending discrimination in hiring practices, increasing the availability of child care, and expanding the coverage of the Federal minimum wage laws to include domestic employment;

Whereas in addition to the service of Congresswoman Chisholm as a legislator, Congresswoman Chisholm has worked to improve society as a nursery school teacher, director of a child care facility, consultant for the New York Department of Social Services, and educator; and

Whereas it is appropriate that the dedicated work and outstanding accomplishments of Congresswoman Chisholm be recognized during the month of March, which is National Women's History Month: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the enduring contributions and heroic achievements of Shirley Anita Chisholm; and

(2) appreciates the dedicated work of Shirley Anita Chisholm to improve the lives and status of women in the United States.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 154—COMMENDING ELIZABETH B. LETCHWORTH FOR HER SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE**

Mr. LOTT (for himself and Mr. DASCHLE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 154

Whereas Elizabeth B. Letchworth has dutifully served the United States Senate for over 25 years;

Whereas Elizabeth's service to the Senate began with her appointment as a United States Senate page in 1975;