

NATIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate National School Breakfast Week. For the past 30 years, the School Breakfast Program has provided nutritious morning meals to our Nation's neediest youth. Today, over 1 million children across the United States are malnourished, and the School Breakfast Program is a first line of defense against this growing epidemic.

The School Breakfast Program was established through the Child Nutrition Act of 1966. Despite this law, many low-income children still go without breakfast each day. Every student eligible for a free or reduced-price school lunch is also eligible for a free or reduced-price breakfast.

In my home State of Illinois, during the 2003–2004 school year, over 1 million children from lower-income families participated in the National School Lunch Program, yet only about 200,000 children received a school breakfast on an average day through the National School Breakfast Program.

This disparity is not unique to Illinois. Nationally, 43 students receive a free or reduced-price school breakfast for every 100 students that receive a school lunch. To receive a free school breakfast or lunch, a family's income must be at or below 130 percent of the poverty line, and to receive a reduced-price school breakfast or lunch, the family income must be at or below 185 percent of the poverty line.

Students who are unable to eat breakfast experience negative physical, emotional and educational effects. Children who do not eat breakfast tend to produce low math and reading scores, have trouble recalling information, and are more likely to have disciplinary and psychological problems.

On the other hand, when children eat a nutritious breakfast, like the meals provided through the National School Breakfast Program, their standardized test scores tend to increase and their memory skills improve. They are less inclined to visit the school nurse complaining of headaches and stomach pangs throughout the school day. They are also less likely to become obese later in life and are more likely to eat more fruit, drink more milk, and consume less saturated fat than students who do not eat meals provided by the school.

From 1989 to today, the number of children participating in the School Breakfast Program has doubled from around 3 million to over 6 million, and if the breakfasts were available to more children, the numbers would likely increase.

In Illinois, the State legislature and the Governor recognized the need for this vital program. On February 15, 2005, Governor Rod Blagojevich signed the Childhood Hunger Relief Act, stipu-

lating that all schools in which at least 40 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches must also provide a breakfast program. This action will hopefully increase the academic as well as physical and psychological well-being of Illinois school children.

Today, I ask that we recognize States like Illinois—States that are providing school breakfasts to their neediest children. I ask that we continue to push toward higher nutritional standards throughout the United States to ensure the well-being of our Nation's youth.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT of 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

Last August, three gay men were violently attacked in Rehoboth Beach, DE. One victim suffered a broken jaw and was knocked unconscious by the attackers who were shouting anti-gay epithets at the victims.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

BLUE STAR FAMILIES WEEK

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the brave men and women who serve around the world in America's Armed Forces, and to recognize what the California State Assembly has designated as Blue Star Families Week.

Blue Star Families Week is an opportunity to show that the United States and California stand behind members of the Armed Forces and their families as they serve with valor at home and abroad.

The Blue Star Flag is an official banner authorized by the Department of Defense and is given to families with loved ones serving in the Armed Forces to place in their windows as a visible sign of their family's sacrifice. Blue Star flags date back to World War I and serve as a symbol of community support and solidarity in times of war and hostility.

I am proud of the men and women of our Armed Forces that are bravely

serving all over the world to protect our freedom, our democracy and our way of life. During my recent trip to Iraq I had the honor of witnessing the strong character of our troops. We owe an immeasurable debt to the families of these men and women who are willing to sacrifice their futures for our country. The Blue Star program is another way we can show how much we value their heroism and bravery.

I am pleased to take time this week to salute the brave heroes in the Armed Forces, and their loved ones, for their tremendous sacrifice and dedication.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO HEAD COACH TOM BRENNAN

• Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Tom Brennan on an outstanding career as the head coach of the men's basketball team at the University of Vermont. As he departs UVM after 19 years, I wish to recognize the contribution he has made to both the University and to the State of Vermont.

Tom began his distinguished career at UVM in 1986. Within just 5 years, in 1991, he was named the America East Coach of the Year, the first of three times he would receive that honor. Throughout his tenure at UVM, Tom worked to improve the basketball program, which became one of the best in the America East under his watch. Tom also became a local favorite on the airwaves as the cohost of "Corm and the Coach," a morning radio show that makes us all appreciate just how hard life can be for Tom's opposing coaches.

In recent years, UVM basketball has been marked by enthusiastic support throughout Vermont and sold-out crowds at Patrick Gym as Tom guided the Catamounts to unprecedented success. In both 2003 and 2004, the Cats captured the America East Championship and secured a trip to the NCAA tournament. On Saturday, the Cats will play for their third straight America East Championship and third straight trip to the NCAA tournament. Tom will retire with at least 262 career victories at UVM, more than any basketball coach in school history.

Cats fans everywhere have grown to respect and admire Tom for the results he produced on the court, the integrity of the program he led, and the character of the young men he helped to shape. Patrick Gym will not be the same without Tom Brennan on the sidelines. I wish him the best as he begins the next chapter of his life.●

TRIBUTE TO CAPT DAVID M. MORRISS

• Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to