in their achievements. IDEA is definitely a law worth recognizing, celebrating, and preserving.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF PUBLIC LAW 94–142, THE EDUCATION FOR ALL HANDICAPPED CHILDREN ACT OF 1975.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, today marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of Public Law 94–142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, now known as Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA].

On that fall day two decades ago, we literally changed the world for millions of children with disabilities. At that time, over 1 million children with disabilities in the United States were excluded entirely from the public school system, and more than half of all children with disabilities were not receiving appropriate educational services.

On that day, we exclaimed that the days of exclusion, segregation, and denial of education of disabled children are over in this country.

On that day we sent a simple, yet powerful message heard around the world: disability is a natural part of a child's experience that in no way diminishes the fundamental right of a disabled child to receive a free and appropriate public education.

On that day, we also sent a powerful message that families count and they must be treated as equal partners in the education of their children.

On that day we lit a beacon of hope for millions of children with disabilities and their families.

Since the enactment of Public Law 94–142, considerable progress has been made in fulfilling the message that was conveyed by the Congress in 1975.

Today, 20 years later, every State now ensures a free appropriate public education to all children with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 18, and most States extend that provision through age 21. Over 5 million children with disabilities are now receiving special education and related services. And all States now provide early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities from birth through age two and their families.

Today, the beacon of hope is burning bright. As one parent from Iowa recently told me:

> Thank God for IDEA. IDEA gives us the strength to face the challenges of bringing up a child with a disability. It has kept our family together. Because of IDEA our child is achieving academic success. He is also treated by his nondisabled peers as ''one of the guys.'' I am now confident that he will graduate high school prepared to hold down a job and lead an independent life.

In May, Danette Crawford, a senior at Urbandale High School in Des Moines testified before the Disability Policy Subcommittee. Danette, who has cerebral palsy, testified that:

> My grade point average stands at 3.8 and I am enrolled in advanced placement courses. The education I am receiving is preparing me for a real future. Without IDEA, I am convinced I would not be receiving the quality education that Urbandale High School provides me.

Mr. President, these are not isolated statements from a few parents in Iowa. They are reflective of the general feeling about the law across the country. The National Council on Disability [NCD] recently conducted 10 regional meetings throughout the Nation regarding progress made in implementing the IDEA over the past 20 years. In its report, NCD stated that ''in all of the 10 regional hearings * * * there were ringing affirmations in support of IDEA and the positive difference it has made in the lives of children and youth with disabilities and their families.'' The report adds that ''all across the country witnesses told of the tremendous power of IDEA to help children with disabilities fulfill their dreams to learn, to grow, and to mature.''

Anniversaries are a time to celebrate; but they are also a time to reflect. So, as we look back on the enactment of IDEA, we must also step back and ask some basic questions: Has the IDEA resulted in full equality of educational opportunity for all children with disabilities? Should we be satisfied with the educational outcomes we are achieving; can we do better?

From the four hearings held by the Subcommittee on Disability Policy, it is clear to me that major changes in IDEA are not needed nor wanted. IDEA is as critical today as it was 20 years ago, particularly the due process protections. These provisions level the playing field so that parents can sit down as equal partners in designing an education for their children.

The witnesses at these hearings did make clear, however, that we need to fine-tune the law, in order to make sure that children with disabilities are not left out of educational reform efforts that are now underway, and to take what we have learned over the past 20 years and use it to update and improve this critical law.

Based on 20 years of experience and research in the education of children with disabilities, we have reinforced our thinking and knowledge about what is needed to make this law work, and we have learned many new things that are important if we are to ensure an equal educational opportunity for all children with disabilities:

For example, our experience and knowledge over the past 20 years have reaffirmed that the provision of quality education and services to children with disabilities must be based on an individualized assessment of each child's unique needs and abilities; and that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities must be educated with children who are not disabled and children should be removed from the regular educational environment only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

We have also learned that students with disabilities achieve at significantly higher levels when schools have high expectations—and establish high goals—for these students, ensure their access to the general curriculum—whenever appropriate—and provide them with the necessary services and supports. And there is general agreement that including children with disabilities in general State and districtwide assessments is an effective accountability mechanism and a critical strategy for improving educational results for these children.

Our experience over the past 20 years has underscored the fact that parent participation is a crucial component in the education of children with disabilities, and parents should have meaningful opportunities, through appropriate training and other supports, to participate as partners with teachers and other school staff in assisting their children to achieve to high standards. And we also know how critical it is for school administrators to have the tools they need to ensure school environments that are safe and conducive to learning.

There is general agreement today at all levels of government that State and local educational agencies must be responsive to the increasing racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity that prevails in the Nation's public schools today. Steps must be taken to ensure that the procedures used for referring and evaluating children with disabilities include appropriate safeguards to prevent the over- or under-identification of minority students requiring special education. Services, supports, and other assistance must be provided in a culturally competent manner. And greater efforts must be made to improve post-school results among minority students with disabilities.

The basic purposes of Public Law 94–142 must be retained under the proposed reauthorization of IDEA: To assist States and local communities meet their obligation to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet the unique needs of these children and enable them to lead productive independent adult lives; to ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected; and to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities.

We also need to expand those purposes to promote the improvement of educational services and results for children with disabilities and early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities—by assisting or supporting systems change initiatives by State educational agencies in partnership with other interested parties, coordinated research and personnel preparation, and coordinated technical assistance, dissemination, and

evaluation, and technology development and media services.

The progress that has been made over the past 20 years in the education of children with disabilities has been impressive. However, it is clear that significant challenges remain. We must ensure that this crucial law not only remains intact as the centerpiece for ensuring equal educational opportunity for all children with disabilities, but also that it is strengthened and updated to keep current with the changing times.

In closing, Mr. President, I would like to quote Ms. Melanie Seivert of Sibley IA, who is the parent of Susan, a child with Downs Syndrome. She states:

> Our ultimate goal for Susan is to be educated academically, vocationally, [and] in life-skills and community living so as an adult she can get a job and live her life with a minimum of management from outside help. Through the things IDEA provides * * * we will be able to reach our goals.
>
> Does it not make sense to give all children the best education possible? Our children need IDEA for a future.

Mr. President, IDEA is the shining light of educational opportunity. And, on this the 20th anniversary of the IDEA, we in the Congress must make sure that the light continues to burn bright. We still have promises to keep.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT AMENDMENTS

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, we are in the process of talking about the Safe Drinking Water Act now, I understand?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. THOMAS. Good. I would like to do that.

Mr. President, I want to speak in behalf of this bill. I think it is one that is very important to all of us, certainly important to my State. I congratulate Senator KEMPTHORNE and Senator CHAFEE and Senator BAUCUS for the hard work and long time that has gone into it. This is an important bill. It has been very long in coming. Last year in the House we worked on this bill. I think it reflects a good deal of thoughtful consideration. Therefore, I believe it deserves the support of Members of this Senate.

It has been an inclusive process in which many people with many interests have been involved. It is important that be the case. We are talking here about a program that affects us all over the country, a country in which the effects are quite different. Certainly some of the small towns in Wyoming have different problems than Pittsburgh or Los Angeles, and one of the efforts we have to make is to make it flexible enough to reflect that. I think this bill does that. Overregulation, certainly, has been on the minds of most people. It is much on the minds of the people I talk to in Wyoming. People are weary of the top-down kinds of regulations, that one-size-fits-all sort of thing. It is difficult to deal with that. I think this bill attempts to do that and does so in a very effective way.

The Safe Drinking Water Act, as it has been, has been an example of the old approach, regulating substances that do not even occur in drinking water and do not pose a risk in particular areas. I always think of the efforts we made in Pinedale, WY, which has a water supply. There is a very deep lake that is close. Even though the testing would show that water was of excellent quality, they were, at least ostensibly, required to invest a great deal of their taxpayers' money to do some things that probably were not necessary.

So people have asked for change and a new direction. The principle guiding this change is common sense. That is what I think we seek to do here, and the sponsors of the bill have done so, I think, successfully. It injects much-needed common sense into the regulatory process while doing a better job at protecting public health.

The current mandate that 25 contaminants be regulated every 3 years regardless of whether there is a risk is repealed. The risk assessment is inserted into the process. States' roles are increased. Water systems are able to focus their efforts and their resources monitoring contaminants that actually occur in the systems. And that is good. In a word, the bill shatters the status quo.

I again thank the sponsors for their attention to a State like Wyoming, which is different—small towns, different sources. So we have worked closely with Senators KEMPTHORNE and CHAFEE to ensure that our communities did have the opportunity to take advantage of the funding mechanisms and the regulatory relief that this bill provides. I thank them for that.

In addition, the small systems, as defined in this bill as those serving under 10,000, will be given special consideration when seeking ways to comply with the regulations.

The bill is not perfect, of course, and there has been a great deal of effort going on each day, and some things needed to be changed. But overall the bill is an excellent one, and is an effort that will reduce the cost to local communities, municipalities but allowing them to protect effectively.

So I urge my colleagues to support the bill. I hope the other body will act quickly, and the President will support our efforts. This bill is needed and we ought to move forward, and I urge that.

Mr. President, thank you. I yield the floor.

Mr. KEMPTHORNE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. KEMPTHORNE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming for his statement on the floor, and I also thank him for his great support in the Environment and Public Works Committee. We are very happy to have him as a cosponsor, and his addition to that committee on behalf of the voices of small town America and rural communities is extremely helpful. We thank him.

Mr. CHAFEE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. CHAFEE. I also want to thank the distinguished Senator from Wyoming for his kind comments and for his help on this legislation. He is a very valuable member of our committee, and we appreciate everything he has done to help with this.

AMENDMENT NO. 3077

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, on behalf of myself, Senators KEMPTHORNE, BAUCUS, REID, D'AMATO, and MOYNIHAN, I send to the desk a printed amendment and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

> The Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. CHAFEE), for himself, and Mr. KEMPTHORNE, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. REID, Mr. D'AMATO and Mr. MOYNIHAN proposes an amendment numbered 3077.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

> On page 168, line 7, strike ''GROUND WATER PROTECTION'' and insert ''WATERSHED AND GROUND WATER PROTECTION''.
>
> On page 173, after line 7, insert the following:
>
> ''(g) WATERSHED PROTECTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—
>
> ''(1) The heading of section 1443 (42 U.S.C.) is amended to read as follows:
>
> ''grants for state and local programs
>
> ''(2) Section 1443 (42 U.S.C.) is amended by adding at the end thereof the following:
>
> ''(e) WATERSHED PROTECTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—
>
> ''(1) IN GENERAL.—
>
> ''(A) ASSISTANCE FOR DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—The Administrator is authorized to provide technical and financial assistance to units of State or local government for projects that demonstrate and assess innovative and enhanced methods and practices to develop and implement watershed protection programs including methods and practices that protect both surface and ground water. In selecting projects for assistance under this subsection, the Administrator shall give priority to projects that are carried out to satisfy criteria published under section 1412(b)(7)(C) or that are identified through programs developed and implemented pursuant to section 1428.
>
> ''(B) MATCHING REQUIREMENTS.—Federal assistance provided under this subsection shall