around here. We go to conference. By that time, little wrinkles crop up, lit- tle problems. We take care of them in conference. No, we can’t do that. We can’t even pass the legislation. Some Senators say: No, we can’t do it. Wrong. We have FEMA. It won’t work. For the life of me, I don’t understand why we are here.

One small example, not so small for Tina. Who is Tina? Tina Eagerton is a lady who fled Louisiana 7 months pregnant but could not find a Florida doctor who would honor her Louisiana Medicaid card, wouldn’t do it. With this legislation, Tina can get some help.

I can talk about Rosalind Breaux, who has colon cancer and was sched- uled for her third round of chemo- therapy on August 31, the day after the flooding began. Her husband has lost his job. There is no health insurance. Rosalind is in a real bind.

I mentioned the letter the adminis- tration has sent. The Senator from Ari- zona has mentioned that letter. I also mentioned the letter we sent in re- sponse, the chairman of the committee, Senator GRASSLEY, and I. That letter from the administration says the ad- ministration claims it can provide relief without the need for congressional action. It can’t. I must also say they do not have the authority. They do not have the authority to provide additional appropriations. That takes an act of Congress. They say, apparently, by implication, they do not need any dollars. That is the implication of that process. They don’t appropriate dol- lars. It is against the law. We have to do that. They do not want us to do it.

The waivers, I might say, also limit eligibility for Medicaid coverage to only those groups of people tradition- ally eligible for Medicaid. Adults with- out children, no matter how poor they are, or how much they need health care, are not covered under Medicaid. The administration’s waiver policy sug- gested by the letter the Senator from Arizona mentioned.

The woman with diabetes would not be covered. She would not be covered. Diabetes is a very time-sensitive ill- ness. Limiting access to benefits in the waiver would mean leaving tens of thousands of Katrina victims without aid.

After Katrina, Louisiana dispatched Medicaid-eligibility workers to more than 200 shelters to enroll evacuees in Medicaid. Of the 4,000 potentially eligi- ble families screened in these shelters, more than 1 in 5 were screened out as ineligible. They did not meet Louisi- ana’s traditional eligibility rules—1 out of 5. No help there. One out of five: You do not meet the traditional screening test.

Our legislation would address that. One out of every three people who have applied for Medicaid in Louisiana fol- lowing Katrina have been denied cov- erage. Let me repeat that. One out of every three people who applied for Medicaid in Louisiana following Katrina have been denied coverage. The waiver process is not going to help that out because the eligibility re- quirements are not raised. Most of these people are denied because they don’t meet the eligibility criteria.

Wrong. Take it out of FEMA. It won’t work. For the life of me, I don’t believe it. What is going on here? Differentiating among individuals during this time of need is not right. This isn’t legislation that is usual; this is an emergency. People need health care right now. Katrina did not dif- ferentiate. Katrina hit all the residents of the gulf hard. We should not dif- ferentiate in our efforts to help those in need.

The second key difference between the administration’s policy and what our bill does is the funds provided to defray the cost of uncompensated care that thousands of health care providers across our Nation are giving to Katrina evacuees. We have mentioned that. Let me repeat that point. The ad- ministration has said it will provide an uncompensated care fund. But the ad- ministration, in this waiver letter re- ferred to on the floor a few minutes ago, has not given any further information about how much would be pro- vided, not one iota, whether it be $1 or zero dollars. The administration has not even given information about how it will be spent.

By contrast, the Grassley-Baucus bill includes an uncompensated care fund of up to $800 million to be spent on compensating those health care providers— that is, hospitals—who have seen a dramatic increase or drop in their patient load as a result of Katrina. The administration promises, but under our bill, there would be no doubt. We would be there. It is not words but deeds. The administration is words. Our legislation is deeds. It is getting it done.

Third, our bill provides 100 percent Federal funding for all evacuees cov- ered under Medicaid, wherever they are, and for the affected States. By contrast, the administration’s waiver policy applied to make States whole. What does that mean? I have serious questions about how they can deliver on that without legislation, because it is unclear that the administration could, under its current statutory au- thority, provide these additional funds to States. I referred to that earlier. I don’t think they have the legal authority to provide additional funds. I have no doubt they intend to do so. I am sure they do. Why wouldn’t they? I just do not believe that they have the legal au- thority to do so. So, the administration again refused my request to make pub- lic the number of national security let- ters that FBI agents have issued since