

other countries today to protect the environment.

Every year, AID manages hundreds of millions of dollars in international health programs. Is this money wasted? We might as well ask whether AIDS and tuberculosis are infectious.

Every year, AID commits a large part of its budget to promoting free markets and democratic development in countries where the United States has important interests. This is not diplomacy. It is hands-on assistance that requires people with special expertise on the ground who can get the job done. Working with foreign governments and private organizations on the nuts and bolts of solving real problems. That is what AID does.

Mr. President, we have a strong need to rewrite the Foreign Assistance Act to redefine the framework for foreign aid. AID can continue to downsize and improve its efficiency. But we should not abolish an agency that is aggressively adapting itself to the changed world we live in and to the shrinking foreign aid budget.

OREGON RECIPIENTS OF OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY INVESTMENT AWARDS

Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, as Congress begins the difficult task of confronting our Federal deficit and addressing the needs of our less-developed communities, we must focus on innovative ideas to meet these needs. Bureaucracy has often failed to provide successful solutions, making the formation of public-private partnerships necessary to jointly aid neighborhoods. Successful community development must be locally specialized. Attempts by Congress to write a Federal prescription for our Nation's underdeveloped communities will not succeed unless these strategies are sensitive to the diverse needs of those localities.

One organization is making a difference in developing communities by providing localized, market-guided assistance. The Social Compact is a coalition of hundreds of leaders from the financial services and community development industries who have combined their forces to strengthen America's at-risk neighborhoods, both urban and rural. Firmly grounded in John Locke's thesis of a covenant between members of society and the community from which one has prospered, emphasizing commonalities rather than accentuating differences, the Social Compact advocates a voluntary call to action, mobilizing institutions to invest their unique capabilities in neighborhood self-empowerment partnerships.

The Social Compact each year recognizes participating partnerships for their achievements in community development. I am pleased to announce that two partnerships in Oregon, the Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives partnered with the U.S. Bank of Oregon, and the Northeast

Community Development Corp. partnered with First Interstate Bank of Oregon, each received the Social Compact's 1995 Outstanding Community Investment Award.

Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives and U.S. Bank of Oregon were recognized for their efforts in reclaiming 350 properties located in some of Portland's most vulnerable areas. This pioneering response to an unprecedented affordable housing crisis in northeast Portland has given residents the opportunity to become homeowners and improve the supply of quality, affordable rental properties as a permanent community asset. Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives was created by the city of Portland in an effort to provide a long-term remedy for large scale foreclosures facing northeast Portland. U.S. Bank of Oregon stepped forward with a pioneering financing solution. The outcome of this teamwork resulted in one-third of the homes being purchased by lower-income families and the remaining units are being rehabilitated into affordable rentals.

The Northeast Community Development Corp. and First Interstate Bank of Oregon were recognized for developing a comprehensive program to provide the opportunity for homeownership for 250 Portland families, reclaiming 4 vulnerable inner northeast Portland neighborhoods. Initially funded by a Federal Nehemiah Housing Opportunity grant, the Northeast Community Development Corp. original aim was to construct and renovate 250 single-family homes that would later provide first-time home ownership opportunities for lower and moderate-income families.

First Interstate took the lead in the project by providing construction financing, grant funding, and a line of credit for the development of the first five demonstration homes. First Interstate provided additional assistance by organizing a consortium of six local leaders to commit \$1.9 million in construction financing and first-time homebuyer programs for potential borrowers. As a result of this private-public teamwork, property values are rising in targeted areas, crime is decreasing, and residents have a renewed sense of pride in their neighborhood.

The ethic of civic responsibility and the spirit of community are fundamental principles which have guided our country's evolution. The award recipients from Oregon are stellar examples of these virtues in our modern times. They should serve as reminders of what can be accomplished when government acts locally in a creative alliance with the private sector.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Thomas, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following measures were read the second time and placed on the calendar:

S. 761. A bill to improve the ability of the United States to respond to the international terrorist threat.

S. 790. A bill to provide for the modification or elimination of Federal reporting requirements.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. PRESSLER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 625. A bill to amend the Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992 (Rept. No. 104-81).

By Mr. DOMENICI, from the Committee on the Budget, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 13. An original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for the fiscal years 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002 (Rept. No. 104-82).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. COCHRAN:

S. 800. A bill to provide for hearing care services by audiologists to Federal civilian employees; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. HELMS:

S. 801. A bill to extend the deadline under the Federal Power Act applicable to the construction of two hydroelectric projects in North Carolina, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HOLLINGS:

S. 802. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to issue a certificate of documentation and coastwise trade endorsement for the vessel ROYAL AFFAIRE; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. McCAIN:

S. 803. A bill to amend the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 in order to revise the process for disposal of property located at installations closed under that Act pursuant to the 1995 base closure round; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BRADLEY:

S. 804. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the excise taxes on tobacco products, and to use a portion of the resulting revenues to fund a trust fund for tobacco diversification, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SIMPSON:

S. 805. A bill to improve the rural electrification programs under the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, to improve Federal rural development programs administered by the Department of Agriculture, to provide for exclusive State jurisdiction over retail electric service areas, to prohibit certain practices in the restraint of trade, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. COCHRAN:

S. 800. A bill to provide for hearing care services by audiologists to Federal civilian employees; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

THE HEARING CARE FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ACT

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, today I am introducing legislation to include audiology services in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program [FEHBP].

This bill would amend the statute governing the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program by requiring FEHBP insurance carriers to guarantee direct access to, and reimbursement for, audiologist-provided hearing care services when hearing care is covered under a FEHBP plan.

The statute governing FEHBP, title 5, United States Code, section 8902(k)(1), allows direct access to services provided by optometrists, clinical psychologists and nurse midwives, yet fails to allow direct access to services provided by audiologists in FEHBP plans covering hearing care services.

The legislation I am introducing today would remedy this situation by permitting direct access to audiology services in FEHBP plans covering hearing care services. This measure will not increase health care costs since it would not mandate any new insurance benefits. On the contrary, the bill should reduce costs of hearing care by facilitating direct access to health care providers who are uniquely qualified to diagnose the extent and causes of hearing impairment.

I hope my colleagues will carefully consider this legislation and join me in support of its enactment.

By Mr. HOLLINGS:

S. 802. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to issue a certificate of documentation and coastwise trade endorsement for the vessel *Royal Affaire*; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

TRADING PRIVILEGES LEGISLATION

• Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I am introducing a bill today to direct the vessel *Royal Affaire*, official No. 649292, to be accorded coastwise trading privileges and to be issued a certificate of documentation under section 12103 of title 46, United States Code.

The *Royal Affaire* was constructed in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1980. The vessel, a sailboat, is 76.3 feet in length,

20.3 feet in breadth, and 8.8 feet in depth and is self-propelled.

The vessel was purchased by Homer C. Burrous of Charleston, SC, in 1989 for approximately \$900,000, with the intention of chartering the vessel for cruises in and out of St. Thomas and other foreign ports in the Caribbean. Since purchasing the vessel in 1989, the owner has had the vessel refitted in a U.S. shipyard at a cost of over \$800,000. Mr. Burrous would like to utilize the vessel to conduct coastal cruises. However, because the vessel was built in New Zealand, it does not meet the requirements for a coastwise license endorsement in the United States.

The owner of the *Royal Affaire* is seeking a waiver of the existing law because he wishes to use the vessel for coastal cruises. His desired intentions for the vessel's use will not adversely affect the coastwise trade in U.S. waters. If he is granted this waiver, it is his intention to comply fully with U.S. documentation and safety requirements. The purpose of the legislation I am introducing is to allow the *Royal Affaire* to engage in the coastwise trade and fisheries of the United States.●

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 803. A bill to amend the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 in order to revise the process for disposal of property located at installations closed under that act pursuant to the 1995 base closure round; to the Committee on Armed Services.

THE BASE TRANSITION ACCELERATION ACT

• Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing legislation that will finally ensure that fairness and discipline are exercised during the conveyance and land transfer portion of the 1995 BRAC round. The Base Transition Acceleration Act will do three things: eliminate the ability of special interests, under the existing process, to impose endless delays and reap unfair benefits; appropriately place control of the redevelopment process in the hands of the communities affected by the BRAC; and speed the economic recovery of those communities adversely impacted by the closing of a military installation in their midst.

Mr. President, the end of the cold war provided a unique opportunity for this Nation to safely down-size our Armed Forces. Doing so required the execution of a two-phase plan; first, reduce the numbers of military personnel; and then, slash infrastructure to a level appropriate for the new size of the force. Toward that end, since 1986 we have reduced our military force structure by nearly 40 percent. Infrastructure, however, has been trimmed by only about 15 percent.

We asked the services to reduce their numbers, they succeeded. We attempted to create an apolitical mechanism through which excess infrastructure might be designated for closure; we failed, failed for two reasons—Government redtape and interference from special interest groups.

Since 1988, a new Federal bureaucracy has grown up around the base closure process. Interagency squabbles and turf battles among DOD, EPA, Interior, HHS, GSA, and many other entities have caused excessive delays in Federal screening, issuance of conflicting and unhelpful regulations, and inordinately intrusive review of redevelopment proposals. The result has been increased costs to the Federal Government and communities alike—including costs to DOD to maintain idle military facilities in caretaker status.

The Base Transition Acceleration Act legislation eliminates this excessive Federal regulation. The legislation strictly limits the timeframe for Federal property screening and empowers a single agency, DOD, to quickly and effectively manage the process. At the same time, it removes the Federal Government from the process of formulating redevelopment plans and places that responsibility within the purview of the communities themselves.

Unfortunately, the problems associated with the BRAC process are not limited to those created between the Federal agencies. Each additional hand that enters the process brings further complication and added time. With every new round of the BRAC, more new hands enter the process. A cottage industry of consultants has evolved and flourished since 1988 when the first round of base closures were ordered. Special interests are inserting themselves with increasing frequency into the military property disposal process.

Each of these competing interests has sought the assistance of their elected representatives or their sponsor agency, and in most cases received it. The result should come as a surprise to on one; this ostensibly apolitical process has become excessively politicized. This proposed legislation takes great strides to correct this problem and to restore fairness to the community redevelopment process.

Over the past year or so, I, along with most other Members of the Senate, have talked extensively with constituents who are deeply troubled by the current round of base closing deliberations. Their anxiety is certainly not difficult to understand. The reasons for their concern are, however, dramatically different from those expressed in earlier rounds.

During the first three rounds, community concerns tended to center around the simple question of whether a base in their community would be ordered closed. This time, the issues are far more complex. Not only do our constituents ask whether the base will close, they now ask other, more difficult questions. They want to know how to avoid a prolonged transition period. They want to know whether to hire consultants. They want to know how to handle special interest groups. They want to know how to deal with the bloated base closure bureaucracy. Most of all, they want to know when