about it in the country. We went back again several weeks ago and did it again in the committee and, hopefully, will have it on the floor. Public participation was broadened and ensured.

There was a notion, when the bill came forth, that it made grazing the dominant use over other uses in multiple use. Not true, nor was it intended to. However, as we came back we specifically put language into the bill that says there is no dominant use. Grazing is not a dominant use. It is a multiple use, and these uses should have a full opportunity.

Environmental protection. The environmental protection under this will continue to be there as it has been before. Laws like endangered species, NEPA, and others will apply, of course, as the decisions are made by the Department.

Standards and guidelines—which does not mean a lot to most of us—has been the core of much of the problem. Standards and guidelines means the rules that will be laid down in Washington for the conduct of this whole issue. We believe, those of us in the West, that the main thrust of the Babbitt operation was to bring these standards and guidelines more to Washington and that we would have a one-size-fits-all kind of a thing that was sent out from Washington to all of the Western States. Our bill provides that local universities, local State agriculture departments, would be involved in the establishment of standards and guidelines. We think that is important.

Fees. The secretary does not deal with fees. We have set up a fee for the grazing program that is based on the value of cattle in the marketplace at a particular time and raise the fees over what have been paid by about 30 percent.

So, Mr. President, we hope that this bill will come before Congress. We think it is a reasonable bill that, again, provides for multiple use and provides for the economic future of the West.

It has always been curious to me that States who came into the Union on an equal basis, according to the Constitution that there should be equity among the States, but that a Cabinet Member in Washington can have more impact on the economic future of Wyoming than anybody in Wyoming, to make rules for 50 percent of the State, a State that is very oriented to minerals, very oriented to agriculture, and agriculture is based on cattle and sheep.

So we think this is a reasonable, bipartisan effort which will be brought before the Senate, hopefully before the end of the year, and will give some stability to a way of life.

It is also important—and I hope later when I come back, and I know you are anxious to hear more—that we will have a map. It is important to see the way ownership patterns exist in the West. For example, one of the things that happened in the development of the railroads is that 20 miles on either side of the Union Pacific Railroad, which was encouraged to develop the West, every other section was given to the railroad to do this, and the other sections remain public. They are still that way. It is called the checkerboard.

These are lands—this is not Yellowstone Park—that are arid, high plains, not particularly productive. So there are no fences, of course. Indeed, you really cannot afford to fence it because it takes anywhere from 50 to 60 acres for an animal unit, and it is shared with antelope, deer, and with elk in some places.

So what I am saying is that these lands are not independently able to function. The same is pretty much true with the whole State in terms of ranches. When the lands were settled under the various settlement acts, the homesteaders, of course, took up the riverbeds, streams, water, the trees, and took up the best of the land, obviously. That which was left is now in Federal ownership. It is very difficult to separate those two things both from the standpoint of livestock and from the standpoint of wildlife. Livestock needs to have the winter feed, the water, and the cover, but in the summertime needs the grass to be able to graze on public lands.

The other side of that, of course, is that the wildlife, which basically lives on the public lands, needs in the winter to have the water and the water developed by the ranchers in their private land.

Mr. President, we look forward to finding a way in which these public lands can be managed to the benefit of the public, to the benefit of this country, and to the benefit of those users in Wyoming.

I thank you very much. I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak as in morning business.

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

REFORMING MEDICAID

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, according to a familiar advertisement in the Nation's Capital, ''If you don't get it, you don't get it.'' Anyone who read the December 12 editorial in the Washington Post entitled ''Budget Sticking Point,'' now gets it and understands there is, indeed, a historic struggle being waged over Medicaid.

Over the past several months, the local liberal spin on the Republican proposals on welfare, Medicaid, and Medicare, has been that we were not really interested in reforming these programs.

According to the critics, the Republicans were only hunting for budget savings without regard to sound public policy. And to its credit, the Post realizes this is empty campaign rhetoric and there is, indeed, much more at stake.

But while the Post concludes the Federal mandates in Medicaid must be preserved, Republicans believe they must end precisely for the same reason. Who should decide how much more than $1.5 trillion should be spent on health care over the next 7 years, the bureaucrats in Washington or the Governors and State legislatures?

Spending $1.5 trillion represents tremendous power. The Republican proposal to invest this responsibility in the States represents a sea-change in how Government works. This realization shakes Washington to its very core. If we are successful, Washington will no longer be the center of this power and that is precisely why so much effort is being made to scare people about the Republican proposals.

This debate over Medicaid is just one chapter in the larger struggle over our system of federalism. The debate goes to the heart of our beliefs about 50 sovereign States united together as a nation. The partnership between the Federal Government and the States in running the current welfare system has been a pretense in the recent past. Over the past few years, the partnership has, in fact, been an adversarial relationship, based on mutual distrust, suspicion, and threats. President Clinton understand this when, as a Governor a few years ago, he joined 47 other Governors to petition Congress for a moratorium on new Medicaid expansions.

Despite the pleas of the Governors, there was no moratorium. Medicaid costs tripled between 1985 and 1993. In 1980, Medicaid spending accounted for about 9 percent of all State spending. In 1990, it accounted for about 14 percent of State spending. Medicaid now consumes 20 percent of State spending.

This trend is a threat to our system of federalism. As Medicaid places greater fiscal demands on States, they have been forced to reduce their percentages of spending on education, transportation, and other vital governmental services. For example, the General Accounting Office reports that Medicaid nearly equals the State expenditures for elementary and secondary education combined. This is a very important yardstick as education has generally been the largest segment of State budgets. Without reform, there will be no choice about how States will determine priorities among important services, the funds will simply go to Medicaid. Washington has seized the power of decisionmaking from those elected officials closest to the people.

The significance of reversing this quiet coup has been distorted by those who share in the power gained by it. The argument that the poor and the institutions which serve them will be

stranded by the States is simply wrong. As the power is drained from Washington, all Americans, including those who depend on others for their access to health care, should eagerly anticipate the reciprocal actions to take place in the States.

Freed from the current adversarial system, the States will be able to design their own unique methods to help families overcome adversity. States will find more innovative ways to use this money to help families than Washington ever imagined. Under the Republican proposal, State governments will be empowered to use Medicaid dollars to act in the same manner as the private sector to lower costs while at the same time improve quality.

Medicaid reform will trigger a series of benefits throughout the States. Last year, President Clinton was right when he stated that ''the health care issue is an important part of welfare reform.'' Although his solution was fatally flawed, he correctly identified the real issue before us now. The President said,

> The biggest problem we've got with welfare for a lot of people is that—remember if you're poor, on Medicaid and no welfare, your children get health care. If you take a minimum wage job in a business that doesn't have health insurance, you have to give up your kid's health care to go to work.

Mr. President, this is precisely why Medicaid reform is so vital. The present system traps families into welfare dependency. The current scheme is laden with perverse disincentives. Many families will return to work and no longer need cash assistance, if the power of Medicaid dollars is used in the marketplace to secure health care for low-income families. For example, the General Accounting Office recently reported that Tennessee has extended coverage to several hundred thousand newly eligible individuals while increasing expenditures by less than 1 percent. State officials in four States with demonstration waivers estimate as many as 2 million previously uninsured individuals can be provided with coverage while yielding savings of about $6 billion over 5 years.

Over the past several years, large private employers have used their muscle in the marketplace. Private sector employers and, I might add, the Federal Government for its own employees, have been using competition in ways to simultaneously lower costs and increase quality.

In Medicaid, however, we have witnessed the opposite effect. The Boren amendment, for example, has been used to actually bid the price of nursing home care up higher. Between 1980 and 1985, Medicaid payments for nursing home care increased by an average of 7.8 percent annually. In 1989, payments had increased by 8.8 percent from the previous year. But after a key Supreme Court decision on the Boren amendment in 1990, Medicaid payments for nursing home care increased by 17 percent in 1991.

Utah's Medicaid Program provides 30 percent more benefits than these provided to the average worker in the private sector. Yet the Federal Government has prohibited Utah from leveling the Medicaid benefits to 118 percent to the average private sector plan. The Governor would have used the savings to extend coverage to people who are currently uninsured, but the Federal bureaucracy refused to approve this initiative.

Through a decision by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the working families of Utah are required to support a system which provides better benefits than they purchase for themselves. This is the system the administration insists it must safeguard. This has nothing to do with protecting the vulnerable.

Medicaid reform is needed to eliminate wasteful and unnecessary duplication. Under current law, States, are required to screen individuals entering nursing homes to prevent inappropriate placement. California has performed 80,000 such screenings each year since 1989 at a total cost of $28.5 million. Only five individuals have been identified by this mandated program as having been inappropriately placed. That is a cost of $5.6 million per individual identified as needing a more appropriate placement. What interest does this serve? Certainly not the interest of the taxpayer nor the recipient. Finding the right nursing home setting just takes plain common sense, not the Federal bureaucracy.

Those who insist on maintaining the status quo are scaring the elderly and disabled. In truth, these needy citizens have nothing to fear from the Republican proposal. The Post editorial is rooted in the past. For a glimpse at the future, I recommend an article by Massachusetts Gov. William Weld entitled, ''Release Us From Federal Nonsense,'' which appeared in the Wall Street Journal this past week. Governor Weld states that:

> Before we privatized mental health services, patients were warehoused in state institutions; now we save $60 million a year, and the patients live in less intrusive settings that almost everyone agrees are much more humane. In case after case, not only did we not hurt the poor, the elderly, and the vulnerable, we managed to do a lot better by them than previous administrations.

It has been the States which have protected the dignity of so many by helping disabled individuals to live with their families. The States understand disabled individuals need a continuum of care and a variety of services including medical care, income support, nutrition assistance, education and training, transportation, and social services. Devolution of authority will improve the coordination and quality of services. Advocacy is strongest at the closest point of service. While Washington works to protect programs, the States are in a superior position to protect the interests of people. It is the arrogance of Washington, as Governor Weld describes, that prevents the States from serving our citizens even better.

Mr. President, the Washington Post was correct to point out that the Medicaid debate is not just about money, although we must not overlook the importance of our securing our economic future through achieving a balanced budget. The Post prefers to promote the current Medicaid system above the interest in restoring the balance of power between the States and the Federal Government. In doing so, it has failed to recognize that Medicaid is drawing resources away from education and other vital services. Moreover, the future ability of the States to preserve their constitutional role in our system of federalism should not be so lightly dismissed. In a landmark case about federalism, Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor warned, ''all that stands between the remaining essentials of State sovereignty and Congress is the latter's underdeveloped capacity for self-restraint.'' Our system of federalism is truly reaching in crossroads and Medicaid is one of the landmarks which will guide our choice.

At its core, the Republican proposal to reform Medicaid is about rediscovering our fundamental principles about Government by consent. Franklin Roosevelt once stated that:

> It must be obvious that almost every new or old problem of government must be solved, if it is to be solved to the satisfaction of the people of the whole country, by each state in its own way.

Mr. President, this simple statement captures so clearly and so precisely what the Republicans are proposing to the American people. There is no greater threat to our democratic institutions today than the consolidation of power in Washington. It is time to free the States and our citizens from the chokehold of the Federal Government. The Post has this much right—the fight is not just about the Federal budget. There is indeed so much more at stake.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent a copy of the Washington Post editorial and a column by Governor Weld be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 12, 1995]

BUDGET STICKING POINT

If the current budget talks break down, the hang-up likely won't be money. The parties will split instead on the ancient question: To what extent should the federal government guarantee a minimum standard of living, or minimum level of benefits, to the poor? The crucial battle-ground in this will be Medicaid, by far the largest federal ''welfare'' program through which the federal and state governments together help pay the health care bills of lower-income children and the needy elderly and disabled—all told, about a seventh of the population.

The money issues won't be easy. But Congress deals with money issues all the time, and the differences between the parties are already starting to melt. The Congressional Budget Office has freshened the economic and programmatic assumptions on which its

estimates of future deficits are based, and more than $100 billion of the problem has disappeared. An agreement to adjust Social Security benefits and such features of the tax code as the personal exemption and standard deduction by less than the full inflation rate for a number of years could raise many billions more. If the Republicans will then backoff their tax cuts a little while the Democrats ease their opposition to a Medicare cuts, you're close to home. Except for the basic question: What should be the future federal role, particularly with regard to assisting the poor.

The Republicans basically think the federal government should do less, and the president has already done a fair amount of retreating on the issue. The current welfare program embodies a federal guarantee of aid to needy single parents and their children; he has indicated he would sign a welfare bill dropping that. He has indicated a willingness to limit future housing aid by capping the appropriations on which it depends as well.

That leaves three other major federal programs for the poor—Medicaid, food stamps and the earned-income tax credit, which stretches the wages of lower-income workers with children. On these the president has said to Democrats and advocacy groups unhappy with his welfare and housing concessions that we will not give major ground but will hold the line. The Republicans, though they've proposed deep cuts and assorted structural changes in all three of these programs, have indicated that on food stamps and the tax credit they don't care that much; they themselves are divided.

On the structure of Medicaid, though, they have said there will be no give, and there you are. They want to go to a system of block grants, cut projected federal spending sharply, cut what the states must put up to get their federal funds, and largely let the states decide how and on whom the money will be spent. This would pretty well eliminate the federal guarantee that the needy young and elderly could count on a certain level of care. The President rightly wants to preserve the guarantee. He would meanwhile cut projected costs by capping the annual increase per beneficiary—the right way to do it.

Much more is at stake in this than just a balanced federal budget and the balance of power between the federal government and the states. Medicaid is not just a major federal cost and major source of aid to state and local governments; it is the insuror of last resort in the health care system. Especially if even costlier Medicare is to be to shaken up and cut, Medicaid needs to be preserved to protect the vulnerable. The alternative is even more people uninsured; the poor, the states and the hospitals and other institutions that serve the poor would all be stranded. This fight is not just about the federal budget and the federal role. It's about that.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Dec. 11, 1995]

RELEASE US FROM FEDERAL NONSENSE

(By William F. Weld)

Right now, America is well on the road to block-granting welfare, Medicaid, and job training, and allowing the states to shape these programs to fit their own ends. And most of the nations' governors say a mighty hurrah.

Washington Democrats, however, talk about this shift of power from the federal government to the states as if it represents a return to a more primitive time—to an America without indoor plumbing or electric lights or a conscience.

We governors find this highly ironic. Because from our perspective in the state houses, it's Washington that has been living in the Walker Evans photographs from the thirties. We embraced the future some time ago.

Most of us already have cleaned up our budgets to eliminate deficits; we've cut taxes; and within the handcuffs the federal government has put on us, we've improved our social services while cutting the bloat.

For example, it's been clear for years that the federal welfare system is an abomination that lays families to waste; Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's been saying this almost since he was in short pants. But year after year welfare bills have been passed without Congress doing anything about the most glaring problems in the system, until finally the states gave up on Washington, applied for waivers, and took things into their own hands as far as the federal government would permit.

So when Washington Democrats characterize our enthusiasm for block grants as naiveté—or worse, a perverse desire to begin some race to the basement—they've missed the point entirely. If the federal government would just release us from its bureaucracy and nonsense, we'd make these programs better for those they serve, and we'd do it for less money.

I think our experience in Massachusetts is instructive.

By the time I was elected governor, Massachusetts had achieved a high state of refinement. Our Department of Corrections was under the wing of the Human Services Office—as if it were the taxpayers' obligation to help them have more children they couldn't support. We had a new sales tax on business services—as if that were the best way to celebrate a thriving service economy.

And our economy was falling to pieces; we were regularly releasing violent criminals back to the streets to continue their mayhem; and we managed to achieve the highest rate of out-of-wedlock teen births in the country.

We began getting Massachusetts' fiscal house in order by taking on the ''budget-busters,'' and many of them were the same ugly mugs the federal government is facing right now.

In the four years before I was first elected governor (1990), Medicaid costs in Massachusetts rose by 20% a year. With Managed Care Medicaid, we brought that down to 3% a year.

We took on welfare, too—a state entitlement program known as General Relief, and it was mighty general indeed. The conditions that got you on the rolls were so loose that if you were over 45 years old, overweight and without a stable work history, you qualified. In other words, I qualified.

We replaced General Relief with an emergency aid program for the elderly, the disabled and children, and managed to save $100 million out of a $14 billion budget, just by targeting the help to those who really needed it.

Advoctes predicted a ''bloodbath.'' They said we'd have people starving in the streets. But nothing of the sort ever happened, and the doomsday scenarios faded away. In fact, a quarter of our General Relief customers didn't even bother to reapply.

All along the way, we stepped on special interests who used the same scare tactics we're seeing today in Washington. But these tactics are far less effective when they are used in one's own district, because voters can more easily see how their money is being spent and, often, misused—another argument for letting states take care of their own.

When we cut taxes, we heard that we were reverse Robin Hoods. What the protectors neglected to mention was that our frugality not only allowed us to phase out the long-term capital gains tax, it also allowed us to lift the tax burden on low-income working people.

When we made changes to Medicaid, we heard that we were abusing the poor. But before we put Managed Care Medicaid in place, most poor children had no primary care physician, and many weren't getting their shots. Now a little girl with an earache doesn't have to report to an emergency room to get medical attention; she has her own doctor who knows her by name. And we've got advocates praising our Medicaid program in public.

Before we privatized mental health services, patients were warehoused in state institutions; now we save $60 million a year, and the patients live in less intrusive community settings that almost everyone agrees are much more humane. In case after case, not only did we not hurt the poor, the elderly and the vulnerable, we managed to do a lot better by them than previous administrations.

Our experience is not unique. All across the country, creative governors are aggressively dealing with problems Washington is just beginning to wake up to. So if the question is whether state governments are responsible enough to dispense welfare and Medicaid funds in our own way—we're more than ready.

Not only can we handle that responsibility, it's rightfully ours. The 10th Amendment of the Constitution says quite plainly that the powers not expressly given to the federal government are reserved to the states and to the people. And common sense dictates the same thing.

Government ought to be as local as possible, as close to the people as it can be, because generalities rarely get the story straight. So in my operation, we're doing some devolving ourselves, putting all the regulatory functions of government under a single office and sunsetting the entire 25,000 pages of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations, so our cities no longer have to apply to a half-dozen state agencies every time they want to put up a stop sign or a curb cut.

When it comes to social programs, the states shouldn't have to beg Washington for the right to put up a stop sign. The welfare reform law my state passed this year is full of badly needed stop signs. It includes a family cap that will allow us to cease subsidizing illegitimacy. It requires those with school-aged children to go to work within 60 days. It requires teenage mothers to live at home and finish high school, so they'll have a shot at something better than welfare. It puts a two-year limit on benefits, so welfare will be what it should be—a temporary leg up, not a permanent lifestyle. And it allows our Commissioner of Transitional Assistance to make exceptions for hardship cases.

For every change we wanted to make, we had to ask Washington's permission for a waiver of federal law and then put up with half a year of paper pushing and haggling. Ultimately, the Clinton Administration refused to grant us one of the cornerstones of our plan, the two-year limit.

The irony here is that our law passed with the overwhelming support of a Democratic Legislature. It's sheer arrogance for Washington to think it knows better than Massachusetts what Massachusetts needs, but the current waiver system encourages that arrogance. If President Clinton really wants to end welfare as we know it, he should sign the bill ending welfare as we endure it.

Washington has long tried to direct our life here at sea level from the summit of Mount Everest. In the process, it has turned entire communities into public sector hells. It has made fatherlessness the norm for two generations of inner-city kids and given birth to a frightening culture of drugs and violence.

We know these communities. Washington doesn't.

It's time for President Clinton to allow the states to give it our best shot. We couldn't do worse than Washington. I know we'll do much, much better.

APPOINTMENT BY THE VICE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Public Law 94–304, as amended by Public Law 99–7, appoints the Senator from Wisconsin [Mr. FEINGOLD] to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COCHRAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

LOW-INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, yesterday I came out on the floor to speak about the energy assistance program. I need not repeat most of what I said, yesterday. But I thought I would try to be brief and summarize.

Mr. President, I am a Senator from a cold-weather State, Minnesota. By cold-degree days, we have the third coldest days in the country behind Alaska and North Dakota. Last year in my State about 330,000 people received some energy assistance so that they would not go cold. Many of them were elderly households, many of them were households with children, and many of them were households with minimum wage workers with an average rent of around $350. Let us think about this as a kind of cold weather lifeline program, almost more of a survival supplement than an income supplement, designed to ensure that people will not go cold.

Mr. President, right now as I speak on the floor of the U.S. Senate, in my State of Minnesota, without exaggeration I can say that there are some people with no heat with the temperatures around zero. Last weekend when Sheila and I were home the temperature was about 50 below wind chill. There are people in the United States of America, in my State, and in other cold-weather States as well, I am sure, Mr. President, who are now living in one room. That is all they are able to heat—one room. There are some people with no oil or propane in their tank. Mr. President, there are some Minnesotans who are trying to heat their home by just turning on their oven. There are also people in my State—I am joined by my colleague from Iowa—who right now are not able to purchase the food they need or the prescription drugs they need because of the money they are now spending for energy maintenance to make sure they do not go cold, because they have such limited means.

In the United States of America right now, in Minnesota, Iowa, and other cold-weather States, there are people who are cold, and I am positive, I am positive as I speak here today, that somebody will freeze to death and then we will take action. It will be too late.

Mr. President, this is the problem. Last year, by the end of December, about $1 billion had been allocated out to our States for assistance. This is not a 1-year program. It does not do any good to tell people they will be able to receive some assistance so they do not get cold in June or July. Time is not neutral. The total cost of the energy assistance program nationally was less than one B–2 bomber. It was $1.3 billion last year, $900 million right now. This is the problem. It was eliminated on the House side. But Senator DASCHLE—and, I might add, other Senators as well, Republicans included, Senator SPECTER being one really good example, and I know Senator HATFIELD cares fiercely about this, and I could list others as well; Senator SMITH from New Hampshire—many people, many from the cold-weather States. We know now what has happened. It has become a moral issue.

Last year by the end of December, about $1 billion had gone out, and I think this year about $230 million has gone out nationwide. In my State of Minnesota, by this time last year, about $25 million—right now, $9 million. We have long waiting lists of people who have no assistance or people who have received only $100 when last year they received $350. What is going to happen to them next month or the month afterwards?

So, Mr. President, I will yield in just a moment for a question from my colleague. I just want to make it clear where we are right now. It is extremely important that if there is a continuing resolution—and there should be because there should not be any Government shutdown—it is extremely important that we have the language to accelerate the allocation of this money.

If you did just 75 percent of last year, I say to my colleague, that would be over $900 million. We must get this out to our States now so people do not freeze to death. There cannot be one Senator or Representative, regardless of party, that could really disagree with this proposition. If this does not happen, Mr. President, with the wording of the continuing resolution at the end of this week, it has to happen at the beginning of next week. And if there is no continuing resolution, I would say to the administration you have the authority because we already have the money. This is forward funded. We already have the money. You have the authority to release that money.

However we get the job done, for God's sake, let us get the job done. That is really what I am saying.

I feel very strongly about any issue, not because I believe this is the only issue that our country is confronted with, not because I do not fully appreciate the overall budget debate and the difficult choices that all of us have to make, not because I do not care fiercely about what will happen in Bosnia and for the safety of our soldiers and that they will be able to make a difference there. Sometimes, in all these statistics and all this alphabet soup, OMB, CBO, baseline budget—you are familiar with what I am talking about—it is just disconnected from the reality of people's lives.

This is such a time. I am a Senator from a cold-weather State, Minnesota, and I will do whatever I need to do as a Senator to get the funding out to my State, and for that matter other cold-weather States, so that people, be they seniors, be they children, be they individuals with disabilities, or be they low-wage families, are able to get some assistance so they can heat their homes now.

Right now, too many of our citizens are cold. Too many of our citizens are without heat. This is wrong. This is a moral issue. We must do something about this, and it is within our power to do something about this today. We have to take action.

I know the Senator from Iowa had a question.

Mr. HARKIN. I just wondered if the Senator will yield.

First of all, Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Minnesota for being a leader on this issue. Both the other day when he took the floor and he spoke about it and again today—I did not catch all of the Senator's remarks; I was on my way over to the floor, but I wanted to just ask the Senator if he was aware of all of the ramifications in the States that are taking place right now. I know the Senator spoke very eloquently about what is happening in Minnesota and the fact that this money is not getting out. But there are some really kind of disingenuous things going on out there. If the Senator will bear with me, I will explain it and then I will follow it with a question.

I am told that in some States in the Midwest, because of the fact that they do not have the necessary funds for the heating program, the Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program, they put the word out that they have just enough money to meet emergency situations, that it is being interpreted in some States as saying an emergency is if an elderly person has been notified by the utility that they are cutting off the utilities. That is the emergency. If you get your utility cut off, then you get it.

I ask the Senator, take a typical elderly person in Minnesota or Iowa, from the Midwest, it is colder than the dickens. They are living in a small town of 900 people, 1,000 people like the small towns where I come from. They are living in a small house—usually it