

which could be expended for the procurement of support services for the central SDIO activity. Its intent is still relevant today.

Those concerns about DOD centralization are founded on traditional beliefs that government works best when it is not all collocated in the Capital region. Centralization of government and contractor personnel results in higher costs. Relocation of functions loses unique capabilities now available through military services and thus creates greater inefficiencies and schedule losses due to the necessity to retrain and replace technical and managerial personnel.

The purpose of this amendment is to clearly establish that the implementation of the NMD JPO decision must continue to be consistent with the assurances we are being given by the Pentagon. The Acting BMDO Director, Adm. Dick West, has just met with our staffs and discussed the organizational details of the new Joint Program Office, as it is now planned. He foresees a central organization of 64 or thereabouts, supported by those on-going activities in the field who have been developing such elements as the interceptor and ground-based radar. At present, these are basically all in the Army sphere of responsibility since the Air Force Space and Missile Tracking System Program is an Air Force program and will not be under the new office, and the Navy has no current role in NMD. Admiral West is convincing in his assurances that those activities which have been so beneficial to the progress in ballistic missile defense in the past will not be adversely impacted by this new central office. Concurrently, a BMDO "Point Paper" has included the following assurances:

The decision to manage NMD using a Joint Program Office (JPO) does not change the fundamental execution of the program. The basic building blocks remain the same and will be developed by the organization already assigned those responsibilities. Contracts that have been awarded will be executed as planned. The Service organizations that have had responsibility for NMD will continue to play the same role. As the program approaches a deployment decision, the role of the services will increase significantly.

Even with this assurance, I believe this amendment is necessary to clearly reflect the intent of Congress for the benefit of Admiral West's successor and those further down the organizational ladder responsible for the implementation of the various components of the new activity.

These are important times for the National Missile Defense Program, when with additional funding and emphasis, Congress has great expectations that these investments will yield the greatest possible dividends. Continuation of the valuable contributions of the NMD activities in their field locations will be critical to that success.

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I believe this has been cleared, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, the amendment is cleared. I urge its adoption.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 4431) was agreed to.

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. McCAIN. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4432

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk on behalf of Mr. LOTT and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arizona [Mr. McCAIN], for Mr. LOTT, proposes an amendment numbered 4432.

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . OCEANOGRAPHIC SHIP OPERATIONS AND DATA ANALYSIS.

(a) Of the funds provided by Section 301(2), an additional \$6,200,000 may be authorized for the reduction, storage, modeling and conversion of oceanographic data for use by the Navy, consistent with Navy's requirements.

(b) Such funds identified in (a) shall be in addition to such amounts already provided for this purpose in the budget request.

Mr. McCAIN. I believe this amendment has been cleared by the other side.

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, this amendment has been cleared, and I urge its adoption.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 4432) was agreed to.

THE AWARD OF THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR TO SEVEN AFRICAN-AMERICANS WHO SERVED IN COMBAT DURING WORLD WAR II

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, the national defense authorization bill under consideration by the Senate contains a very special provision that, once enacted, will clear the way for the President to award the Medal of Honor to seven African-Americans who served their Nation with the utmost distinction in combat during World War II.

Pvt. George Watson of Birmingham, AL, was on board a ship which was attacked by enemy bombers. When the ship was abandoned, Private Wilson remained and assisted several soldiers who could not swim to reach the safety of a liferaft. This heroic action subsequently cost him his life but resulted in saving the lives of his comrades.

Capt. Charles L. Thomas of Detroit, MI, though grievously wounded when his scout car was subjected to intense enemy artillery, self-propelled gun, and

small arms fire, directed the emplacement of two antitank guns to return enemy fire. Only after he was certain that a subordinate was in full control of the situation did he permit himself to be evacuated.

S.Sgt. Ruben Rivers of Oklahoma City, OK, though severely wounded when his tank hit a mine, refused medical treatment, took command of another tank, and advanced to the objective. Repeatedly refusing evacuation, Sergeant Rivers continued to direct his tank fire at enemy positions through the next day until he was killed by the enemy.

S.Sgt. Edward A. Carter, Jr., of Los Angeles, CA, while attempting to lead a three-man group was wounded five times and finally was forced to take cover. As eight enemy riflemen attempted to capture him, Sergeant Carter killed six of them and captured the remaining two.

First Lieutenant John R. Fox of Cincinnati, OH, and some other members of his observer party voluntarily remained on the second floor of a house to direct defensive artillery fire while the majority of U.S. forces withdrew in the face of overwhelming numbers. As the Germans continued to press the attack toward the area that he occupied, he adjusted the artillery fire into his own position knowing that this was the only way to stop the enemy attack. Lieutenant Fox's body was later found along with the bodies of approximately 100 German soldiers.

First Lieutenant Vernon J. Baker, of Cheyenne, WY, destroyed enemy installations, personnel, and equipment during his company's attack against a strongly entrenched enemy in mountainous terrain. When his company was stopped by the concentrated fire from several machinegun emplacements, he destroyed three machinegun nests and an enemy observation post. He then covered the evacuation of the wounded personnel of his company by occupying an exposed position and drawing the enemy's fire.

Pfc. Willy F. James, Jr., of Kansas City, KS, as lead scout was the first to draw enemy fire. After being pinned down for over an hour, he returned to his platoon, and led a squad in the assault, accurately designating targets as he advanced, until he was killed by enemy machinegun fire while going to the aid of his fatally wounded platoon leader.

These seven heroes have many things in common: their selfless dedication to their comrades, their unwillingness to give up despite overwhelming odds, their leadership in the face of certain death, and their race.

A study, commissioned in 1993 by the Acting Secretary of the Army to review the Medal of Honor processing procedures as applied to African-American soldiers in World War II, revealed that no African-American soldier was recommended for the Medal of Honor for service in World War II.

Concluding, in part, that this was reflective of the national racial climate

and the use of African-American soldiers in World War II, the study recommended that 10 African-Americans be considered for the award of the Medal of Honor.

The Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of Defense, and the President recommended legislation that would permit the award of the Medal of Honor to the seven heroes I previously mentioned.

This marks the end of a long journey for these seven men—six of whom who have died before they could realize this great honor.

It is not the end of a journey, however, for our military services as they continue to lead the Nation in matters of equal opportunity, elimination of racial and gender discrimination, and creation of an environment that is, in fact, based on individual merit and performance.

I have always been proud of the way our military services were able to recognize the importance of eliminating discrimination and prejudice. I have always been proud of the tremendous efforts that have been made and that will continue to be made in this area.

Surely, 100-percent success has yet to be achieved, but the U.S. military is clearly a beacon lighting the way for the rest of the Nation.

So, too, today I am proud of what these heroes have done. But I am also proud of how we as a nation can look back into our history and, seeing something that just is not quite right, can and will fix it.

I regret that six of our seven heroes are no longer with us. I hope and pray that their families and loved ones will realize the significance of what these courageous men accomplished and permit our Nation to honor them in this way.

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

Mrs. KASSEBAUM addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mrs. KASSEBAUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business for 5 minutes.

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

HEALTH INSURANCE REFORM

Mrs. KASSEBAUM. Mr. President, it has been exactly 2 full months since the Senate unanimously passed the Health Insurance Reform Act 100 to nothing. However, because Republicans and Democrats have been unable to reach agreement on one outstanding issue—the size and scope of the Medical Savings Account Demonstration Program—we have not been able to make further progress in reaching a compromise between the House and Senate language on this bill.

Many, I think, assume that this legislation which passed unanimously in the U.S. Senate has already become law, and that is just not the case. I

would suggest that every day we wait the stakes grow higher. As the number of legislative days dwindle:

More American families lose their health insurance coverage;

More American families are unable to obtain insurance because of pre-existing illnesses or outright discrimination;

Millions of Americans hold onto jobs that they would otherwise leave for fear of losing their health coverage;

Patients suffering from AIDS, and our seniors and disabled citizens, do not have adequate resources to pay for care;

And self-employed men and women, and small businesses, find the cost of health insurance increasingly out of reach.

The bipartisan health reform legislation that passed both the Senate and the House in April would help address these critical issues. The General Accounting Office [GAO] estimates that the reforms at the heart of the bill will help at least 25 million Americans each year.

There is no disagreement between Republicans and Democrats about how to help these 25 million Americans. Yet each day that we quibble over whether to allow a tiny fraction of the insurance market to test the concept of medical savings accounts, the chance to enact reforms that will help these 25 million Americans grows dim.

As my colleagues know, the House passed a very different bill from the Senate. But after weeks of discussions and sometimes tense negotiations between Republican leaders, we have reached agreement on every outstanding issue—except for MSA's. The House has agreed to drop altogether controversial provisions on multiple employer welfare arrangements and medical malpractice. While many—including myself—strongly believe we need to help small employers gain purchasing clout and control the health care costs through malpractice reform, all of us recognized that compromise was necessary to reach a bipartisan consensus on the legislation.

Mr. President, I want to assure my colleagues and the American people that the core of the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill is firmly in place in the House-Senate compromise. Those provisions will greatly enhance the health security of American workers. In addition, the compromise legislation increases the deduction for self-employed individuals from 30 to 80 percent, provides tax deductions to help make long-term care more affordable for our seniors, and helps reduce health costs by fighting fraud and abuse and reducing the paperwork burden imposed on patients, doctors, and hospitals.

In an attempt to reach agreement on the remaining outstanding issue, Republicans have offered three separate compromises on medical savings accounts. Unfortunately, these concessions seem to have done little to narrow the gap between Republicans and

Democrats in the House and Senate, and the White House.

Last night, under the leadership of the distinguished majority leader, Republicans proposed an extremely generous, constructive compromise that will allow us to test the concept of MSA's and assess their impact in the small employer market. As my colleagues know, I have grave concerns about the potential impact of MSAs. But I believe this proposal is fair and limited, and contains protections sufficient to guard against adverse risk selection. It was offered in good faith and goes a long way toward meeting concerns raised by the President. In fact, it goes well beyond the agreement I reached earlier with many Republicans in the House and Senate conference.

As part of this agreement:

Republicans have agreed to reduce the scope of the 4-year demonstration program to firms with 50 employees or less, and to require an affirmative vote to expand MSA's to large employers and individuals. That is a significant concession.

The Joint Committee on Taxation estimates that MSA's will be available during this 4-year demonstration to less than 1 percent of the total work force and slightly more than 1 percent of the work force with insurance.

Equally important, reducing the size of the demonstration to firms with 50 workers or less will help guard against risk selection because the underlying bill extends guaranteed issue and renewal requirements to firms with 50 or fewer workers. Moreover, this is the portion of the insurance market where the States have worked aggressively to protect consumers and guard against risk selection.

The proposal contains a fire process for assessing the impact of MSA's by an independent, nonpartisan organization. In addition, the Secretary of the Treasury is required to annually monitor the MSA's impact on the market and report to Congress as to whether the legislation is necessary to reduce costs due to excessive enrollment.

Finally, Republicans have agreed to reduce further individuals' out-of-pocket exposure by lowering the maximum MSA deductible and requiring MSA plans to cover at least 70 percent of covered services once an individual reaches the deductible. We also have agreed to further reduce the tax advantages of MSA's by limiting annual contributions.

Moreover, high-deductible plans must meet disclosure requirements, and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners is directed to promulgate further consumer protection standards.

Mr. President, despite significant concessions, I believe, on the part of Republicans, however, the White House and congressional Democrats continue to raise new demands and to insist that high-deductible MSA policies meet nondiscrimination and consumer protection standards well beyond current