

bags are available there is something they can do to protect their children. Specifically, they should consider placing all children under 12 in the back seat of their vehicles whenever the vehicle is in motion. Studies have shown the back seat to be the safest place for children in passenger vehicles. In fact, Germany already requires this by law.

I want to applaud the NTSB's call for educational campaigns emphasizing the importance of transporting children in the back seat of passenger vehicles. I know of one car manufacturer that recently developed an advertising campaign urging this safety measure as part of its efforts to raise public awareness on the dangers of passenger side air bags to children. We must improve vehicle occupant protection and initiatives like these offer significant safety benefits.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR MICHAEL ANTHONY FIGURES

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, Alabama State Senator Michael Anthony Figures, of Mobile, passed away on Friday, September 13, 1996. He was President Pro Tem of the State Senate, making him the highest-ranking African-American in the State legislature.

This is the second highest-ranking position in the Alabama Senate and one of the most powerful and visible posts in State government. Senator Figures was the first black to ever hold the job and was exceptionally effective and politically astute. He could dissect an issue and get to its essence very quickly and directly. He was very close to Lieutenant Governor Don Siegelman, President of the Senate, and was instrumental in carrying out his legislative agenda.

Senator Figures, who was only 48 years of age, was almost universally admired by the people who knew and worked with him. Both friends and political adversaries admired and appreciated his honesty, integrity, and work ethic.

Senator Figures was born on October 13, 1947, the youngest of three sons of Reverend Coleman and Mrs. Augusta Mitchell Figures. He attended Stillman College and the University of Alabama Law School. He was first elected to the State Senate in 1978 as a Democrat, at that time only the third black person to serve in the Senate. He represented District 33, which includes part of Mobile and Prichard.

Over the years, he built a solid legislative record on local and statewide issues. He worked long and hard to ensure minority representation while helping to create a "strong" mayoral position in Mobile's city government. Many view his finest legislative accomplishment the 1994 Senate passage of former Governor Jim Folsom's "Alabama First" education reform plan. Although it did not pass the House, it received 32 out of 35 votes in the Senate, due largely to Senator Figures' tenacious leadership and persuasion.

Senator Figures was a founder of the Alabama New South Coalition, started in the 1980's to promote progressive causes and candidates. This influential political caucus has been instrumental in bringing blacks and whites in Alabama together. Senator Figures's wife, Vivian Davis Figures, is a member of the Mobile City Council. They had four sons together, Jelani Anthony, Shomari Coleman, Akil Michael, and Derrick.

Senator Figures was a visionary and progressive leader who will be sorely missed by the people of Alabama. He had considerable ability, intellect, and drive. As one of the most influential politicians in Alabama's government, he had an unyielding desire to correct what he perceived as wrongs in society. He was an outstanding orator and had a quick mind and will be impossible to replace. He had an uncommon ability to smooth over disagreements and build bridges. Other members of the Senate really listened to him and responded to his arguments.

Much of his success was rooted in his high degree of integrity. He was a stickler for following the Senate's procedural rules, even if bending those rules might have helped his side prevail. He never compromised his honesty or credibility as he quickly ascended to the heights of power and influence.

The sad and untimely death of State Senator Michael Figures is an immeasurable loss for my State. He was an uncommon force for justice and progress who accomplished a great deal in a relatively short time. I extend my sincerest condolences to Vivian and their entire family in the wake of this loss. I hope they find some solace in the fact that he truly made Alabama a better state and better place to live. His many lasting contributions will stand as his personal legacy and as a testament to his ideals and leadership.

WHY TAMPER WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL SUCCESS STORY

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I am pleased to note that, once again, American business has succeeded in significantly reducing the amount of chemicals released into the environment. According to the most recent report from the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) Data Release of 1994, releases of chemicals declined nearly nine percent between 1993 and 1994. Since the TRI began in 1988, overall chemical releases have dropped more than 44 percent. This decline is particularly impressive because it has occurred in tandem with economic growth. This is an environmental success story.

This successful reduction affirms that an approach to environmental protection which encourages the participation of states and businesses can and does work. It argues for a continuation of approaches to environmental protection that use voluntary solutions, technological innovations and

increased flexibility. As the report shows, we should have confidence in this successful public policy strategy.

Unfortunately, though, these promising statistics have been ignored. The TRI facts have not deterred the Clinton Administration from considering further burdens on America's society.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced that it plans to require businesses to file new extensive reports about how chemicals are used in the manufacturing process. This proposal is called "Materials Accounting," and it is flawed for several reasons.

First, the proposal to track materials would place a new and very costly hardship on the business community. Initial estimates indicate that the additional cost to our Nation's businesses in direct reporting paperwork costs alone could be as much as \$800 million. In addition to being extremely costly, this proposal is completely at odds with the President's pledge in March 1995 to simplify and ease paperwork burdens on American businesses.

I'm even reminded of the President's recent speech in Kalamazoo, MI, where he reaffirmed this goal to reduce administrative burdens. Well, for me, nearly \$1 billion is real money. It is a real cost for America's business community. It is a real paperwork burden that cannot be ignored.

Already TRI generates 80,000 reports per year. And, it takes EPA nearly 2 years to provide this existing information to the communities nearest to the facilities producing these reports. It seems very basic—before EPA unilaterally increases the size of its two-inches thick report and further delays its publication, specific statutory authority should be provided. The EPA's actions to expand it reporting requirements are not authorized in law. How can EPA be responsive and concerned about the risks faced by communities living near the reporting facilities, when it requires a 2-year detour of the data with its Washington bureaucrats?

Apart from the billion-dollar administrative cost, Materials Accounting will jeopardize America's global competitiveness by putting our most innovative technologies at risk. Our country's position in the world's economy is dependent upon the development of superior technology and the ability to protect that technology from competitors, both international and domestic. Information about the amounts of chemicals used in and created during a production process will provide competitors with access to trade secrets. This does not make good business sense. In fact this seriously endangers the confidentiality of proprietary business information which is essential in the marketplace.

Third, this approach would make sense only if substantial, tangible and quantified environmental benefits clearly exceeded the costs. However, I have seen no analysis which supports this premise. On the contrary, I believe