

the Administration to base its decision next March 1 on a specific set of measurable benchmarks. In brief, my proposal requires progress on nine specific issues. These include progress on establishing an interdiction network of radars, progress on extradition, progress on dealing with corruption, steps to resolve carry weapons, steps to reach a maritime agreement, and steps to resolve refueling rights.

I believe that this approach and these measures give us the reasonable terms of reference for how to proceed. This approach gives us the opportunity and time to develop the cooperation on the drug issue that I believe we all want.

This resolution outlines both the concerns that have been expressed by Congress and what we expect Mexico to accomplish before March 1, 1998. Not rhetoric, but actions. We ought to proceed with care before we take steps to fundamentally alter the United States-Mexican relationship. But we must keep faith with our responsibilities to the public.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 11—RELATIVE TO A NUTRITION PROGRAM

Mr. GREGG (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. JEFFORDS, and Mr. KENNEDY) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources:

S. CON. RES. 11

Whereas older individuals who receive proper nutrition tend to live longer, healthier lives;

Whereas older individuals who receive meals through the nutrition programs carried out under the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) have better nutrition than older individuals who do not participate in the programs;

Whereas through the programs 123,000,000 meals were served to approximately 2,500,000 older individuals in congregate settings, and 119,000,000 meals were served to approximately 989,000 homebound older individuals in 1995;

Whereas older individuals who participate in congregate nutrition programs carried out under the Act benefit not only from meals, but also from social interaction with their peers, which has a positive influence on their mental health;

Whereas every dollar provided for nutrition services under the Older Americans Act of 1965 is supplemented by \$1.70 from State, local, tribal, and other Federal funds;

Whereas home-delivered meals provided under the Act are an important part of every community's home and community based long-term care program to assist older individuals to remain independent in their homes;

Whereas the home-delivered meals represent a lifeline to many vulnerable older individuals who are not able to shop and prepare meals for themselves;

Whereas the nutrition programs carried out under the Act successfully target the older individuals who are in greatest need and most vulnerable in the community; and

Whereas the nutrition programs have assisted millions of older individuals beginning with the enactment of Public Law 92-258, which established the first Federal nutrition

program for older individuals, and continuing throughout the 25-year history of the programs; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the Senate—

(1) celebrates the 25th anniversary of the first amendment to the Older Americans Act of 1965 to establish a nutrition program for older individuals, and

(2) recognizes that nutrition programs carried out under the Older Americans Act of 1965 continuously have made an invaluable contribution to the well-being of older individuals.

SENATE RESOLUTION 63—PROCLAIMING "NATIONAL CHARACTER COUNTS WEEK"

Mr. DOMENICI (for himself, Mr. DODD, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. KEMPTHORNE, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. FRIST, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. SPECTER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 63

Whereas young people will be the stewards of our communities, Nation, and world in critical times, and the present and future well-being of our society requires an involved, caring citizenry with good character;

Whereas concerns about the character training of children have taken on a new sense of urgency as violence by and against youth threatens the physical and psychological well-being of the Nation;

Whereas more than ever, children need strong and constructive guidance from their families and their communities, including schools, youth organizations, religious institutions, and civic groups;

Whereas the character of a nation is only as strong as the character of its individual citizens;

Whereas the public good is advanced when young people are taught the importance of good character and that character counts in personal relationships, in school, and in the workplace;

Whereas scholars and educators agree that people do not automatically develop good character and, therefore, conscientious efforts must be made by institutions and individuals that influence youth to help young people develop the essential traits and characteristics that comprise good character;

Whereas although character development is, first and foremost, an obligation of families, the efforts of faith communities, schools, and youth, civic, and human service organizations also play a very important role in supporting family efforts by fostering and promoting good character;

Whereas the Senate encourages students, teachers, parents, youth, and community leaders to recognize the valuable role our youth play in the present and future of our Nation and to recognize that character is an important part of that future;

Whereas in July 1992, the Aspen Declaration was written by an eminent group of educators, youth leaders, and ethics scholars for the purpose of articulating a coherent framework for character education appropriate to a diverse and pluralistic society;

Whereas the Aspen Declaration states, "Effective character education is based on core ethical values which form the foundation of democratic society.";

Whereas the core ethical values identified by the Aspen Declaration constitute the 6 core elements of character;

Whereas the 6 core elements of character are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship;

Whereas the 6 core elements of character transcend cultural, religious, and socioeconomic differences;

Whereas the Aspen Declaration states, "The character and conduct of our youth reflect the character and conduct of society; therefore, every adult has the responsibility to teach and model the core ethical values and every social institution has the responsibility to promote the development of good character.";

Whereas the Senate encourages individuals and organizations, especially those who have an interest in the education and training of our youth, to adopt the 6 core elements of character as intrinsic to the well-being of individuals, communities, and society as a whole; and

Whereas the Senate encourages communities, especially schools and youth organizations, to integrate the 6 core elements of character into programs serving students and children: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) proclaims the week of October 19 through October 25, 1997, as "National Character Counts Week"; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States and interested groups to embrace the 6 core elements of character and to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues, both Republican and Democrat—and especially Senator DOMENICI—in submitting this year's resolution to designate the week of October 19-25 as Character Counts Week.

I believe it is important that we put character back into our vocabulary. The American people are crying out for virtue and values—character does count and it's essential that we focus our efforts in extending this message.

The Character Counts movement, which emphasizes trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship, seeks to teach the core elements of good character to our Nation's young people.

One of the most important things we can ever do for our children is to help them learn and understand the value of virtue and the importance of character.

The Character Counts Coalition is gaining momentum across the country, and I am proud to be a part of that effort.

I think it is clear from the reports every night on the news, that such a movement has never been more timely. I am proud that the citizens of my home State, Tennessee, have joined the call for character renewal.

Last year, I spoke of the city of Greeneville, TN, which put together a character education program featuring 10 community virtues including self-respect, respect for others, perseverance, courtesy, fairness and justice, responsibility, honesty, kindness, self-discipline, and courage. Since then, Greeneville has extended its character education program from the city schools to the county school district, too.

Mr. President, I am proud that Hamblen County schools in Morristown, TN, have adopted the Character

Counts Program with the leadership provided by their school superintendent, Ernest Walker. In addition, they have a local advisory board composed of parents and leaders involved with youth activities in their professional and volunteer capacities.

Gary Chesney, a school board member has said "It's good for schools to reinforce the job parents do at home with their kids."

I had the opportunity to attend the kickoff event for the Sullivan County schools' Character Counts Program. Juvenile Court Judge, Steve Jones, helped initiate this effort and is an outstanding example of how one person can make a difference in a community. Judge Jones calls Character Counts "the ultimate prevention program."

In a way, the Character Counts movement—I believe—is an act of renewal. By welcoming our children into a world of shared values and ideals, we invite them to continue the task of preserving the principles we hold most dear.

Mr. President, Tennesseans have joined the national effort to save our children from the moral decay we see all around us because they recognize that the only way to preserve this great democracy—this system that requires so much from each of us—and our American way of life, is to instill virtue and moral fortitude in the next generation of Americans.

This will not happen without our effort, and without the incredible leadership of movement like Character Counts. Again, I commend Senator DOMENICI, and all those who are working so hard, to make character count once again in the United States of America.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, might I first say to my good friend, Senator FRIST, from Tennessee, I compliment you on your remarks and thank you very much for what you are doing. I believe we are on to something. I believe people in your State and in my State and in every State in America are beginning to understand that the time is now—in fact, it might be past—for us to empower our teachers and parents once again to inject a very common, ordinary idea into the classroom where our children spend much of their time. Students, in an attempt to learn how to be grownup, self-sustaining citizens need to be empowered in our classrooms, in various ways, with character education, plain and simple.

Before this movement, many teachers were frightened to talk about trustworthiness, which means you should not lie, which means there is a virtue to honesty, which means that you ought to be loyal. When you make a commitment, you ought to live up to it.

Many of our teachers and principals and superintendents were frightened of the notion that we would talk with our young people about responsibility. They thought that was an infringement some way or another on somebody, somewhere, somehow who ought to be teaching this.

Respect: Our teachers were frightened with the notion that we ought to actually use that word and get our young people to understand the word "respect" has meaning and to find ways to instill into our classrooms, and thus into our children, the idea of basic human respect, one person for another.

Or fairness, or caring, or citizenship. Those six simple words—the six pillars—form the nucleus for what is commonly known as Character Counts that is associated with the Character Counts Coalition of America.

Today, for the fourth year, with the assistance of the original cosponsors, Senators DODD, COCHRAN, MIKULSKI, BENNETT, LIEBERMAN, KEMPTHORNE, DORGAN, FRIST, and CLELAND, and I am sure many others will join us, we are going to adopt soon in this Senate a resolution setting aside a week in our Nation when our communities, our schools, and our businesses will participate in character development programs. These six pillars of character that I have just described will come once again to the forefront and will become commonplace words for the participatory activities of the previous year and with renewed commitments in the future.

I am very proud to say that since the Aspen Declaration was adopted—an event which occurred sometime in 1990 or thereabouts under the auspices of an ethics foundation known as the Josephson Foundation, headed by an ethics professional and lawyer named Michael Josephson—an event attended by about 70 or 80 Americans from all walks of life, after 2 or 3 days of discussions they came forth with these six pillars of character and this notion of Character Counts. These six pillars are words that we should get back into our children's vocabulary and into their daily lives. Since that meeting, the program relies almost exclusively on action at the grassroots. There is a modest national effort directing this program, but the real efforts are at the grassroots to take those six words and put them into our daily lives.

I am proud to say, and perhaps brag, that the State among all the States that is doing the most in this area is the State of New Mexico. I took this notion to my home city of Albuquerque and asked Mayor Chavez to help me, and together we started a Character Counts Program for the city. Believe it or not, it has spread from that community to almost every community in New Mexico. I will soon, just for the record, state the counties, municipalities, and school districts wherein Character Counts is now a vital part of daily life.

Now, fellow Senators, if you want to do something exciting, you get Character Counts started in your States. You go on one of your recesses to visit a grade school, a grade school that has the six pillars of character not only in the vocabulary day by day in that school but in the month-by-month selection of one of those words as the

word of the month, whereby all the students practice the word "responsibility."

Now, they all do it differently. Nobody has a book on this. Nobody says exactly how it ought to be done. But if you want to do something exciting, start this program and get your school boards committed, the superintendents committed, and then get the teachers committed, and you will see something very dramatic happen. The teachers are excited that for once they have been relieved of the fear of discussing good character, and you will find that with parent groups and others this is becoming a vital and important part of the daily education life.

I frequently go to these schools when they are having their monthly assembly. That is how most of them do it. They have a monthly assembly, they commend people, grant certificates, give awards. I am reminded of one where the grade school was putting on a play with reference to the monthly word which was "responsibility." Something very, very funny happened. They had chosen Little Red Riding Hood as their skit. I had a lot of difficulty understanding how that had to do with the word of the month, "responsibility." As that wonderful skit completed, they recalled how Little Red Riding Hood did not quite follow the instructions that were given to her by her parents and went astray and, as a result, all these things happened, including in the one version where the grandma got eaten up by the wolf. When they finished the play, they all stood up front, and their meaning of "responsibility" was that if Little Red Riding Hood had followed the directions given by her parents and been more responsive, and thus responsible, then nothing bad would have happened to grandma. I am not sure everybody takes the story that way, but in a sense it shows you how young people, helped by adults, can get the message across.

I was recently in a community of Clovis, NM. A grade school there has been heavily involved in Character Counts. As my wife and I walked in to visit, they had just recently composed, under the direction of their wonderful music teacher, a song with its own melody and its words about the six pillars of character, and everyone in the school would soon know it. Part of the participation in the Character Counts program is this kind of activity.

This resolution endorses character education for children. It clearly states that children need, first and foremost, strong and constructive guidance from their families. In addition, children's communities—including schools, youth organizations, religious institutions, and civic groups—play an important supportive role in fostering and promoting good character. The resolution identifies six core elements of character that transcend cultural, religious, and socioeconomic differences that are intrinsic to the well-being of

individuals, communities, and society as a whole: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.

These six simple elements are commonly referred to as the six pillars of character. They represent the values that define us at our best—the common ground we can build upon—individual by individual, family by family, community by community. Arguably, there can be many additions to this list. These six, however, are ones that can serve as the core elements of good character.

Since introduction of the first “National Character Counts Week” resolution, we are witnessing an enormous groundswell of interest in the issue of character education. Secretary of Education Riley speaks to this issue often in his public addresses, and countless other educators have programs and training sessions to promote character development activities. More important, however, is the extraordinary support of character education at the local level. This is where character development programs are the best because they involve the children and the community at large. And, character education is not just for children, it is for everyone who cares deeply about the social and cultural pulse of this country.

As the resolution quotes from the Aspen Declaration: “The character and conduct of our youth reflect the character and conduct of society; therefore, every adult has the responsibility to teach and model the core ethical values and every social institution has the responsibility to promote the development of good character.”

From everything I have seen in the State of New Mexico, children and adults alike are embracing the six pillars of character. They are finding ways to spread the message—from plays, to musical groups, to school lessons, to printing the messages on billboards. Let me just briefly outline a few of the community initiatives and related activities that support the character-building idea:

The Albuquerque Public School (APS) system has endorsed the incorporation of character education programs in all of its 119 schools. It estimates that between 80–90 percent of its 89,000 students have been introduced to the Character Counts program.

The Archdiocese of Santa Fe Catholic Schools system has incorporated Character Counts programs in all of its 21 schools—from preschool through seniors in high school—and has interwoven the six pillars of character in all of its classes.

The New Mexico television and radio media have jointly cooperated to promote Character Counts through news coverage, public service announcements, and incorporating Character Counts in most of their other public affairs projects. For example, there is now an annual Character Counts Care Fair each December. All of the tele-

vision stations take part, illustrating their Christmas charitable projects; they used the Character Counts theme in all of their air promotions for their holiday collection drives. Additionally, the KOB-TV/Hubbard Foundation made Character Counts one of the foundation’s major grantees in 1996, with the award of \$5,000 to be used by the Albuquerque Character Counts Coalition to help promote the character education initiative.

In Farmington, the San Juan County Character Counts group has translated each of the six pillars into the Navajo language and produces posters for the children.

In Gallup, the McKinley County School District incorporates Character Counts into its schools, and the local Character Counts organization is developing a business community program to help support school and civic activities.

The Las Cruces Character Counts Partnership Taskforce selected three students for special recognition for their Character Counts achievements. The elementary and secondary student winners received a day with the mayor and the Governor of New Mexico, and the high school winner received a 3-day visit to Washington, DC, including attendance at the inauguration of President Clinton.

The New Mexico State Department of Education has initiated plans to commence an overall assessment program to provide basic data to determine future needs, changes, additions, and modifications of the program throughout the State.

The Lea County Coalition for Character Counts planned an entire week of activities for last year’s Character Counts Week. It included an art show of children’s works at the city library depicting people in situations showing respect and responsibility. It also included a chamber of commerce-sponsored hotline that ran public service announcements for Character Counts Week.

The Character Counts student council from Gadsden High School formed committees for cleaning up the school and school grounds, developed door contests in the school and public announcements at football games on the six pillar words, and participated in the school talent show with Character Counts lessons.

The Roswell Character Counts Partnership Taskforce has initiated training programs for all youth league program coaches and volunteers to include character programs in summer youth activities.

T-VI—Technical Vocational Institute—in Albuquerque now offers two 5-week sessions on Character Counts.

I have given but just a fraction of the exciting programs and initiatives under way in the State of New Mexico to promote the six pillars of good character. Literally thousands and thousands of children and families, schools, youth organizations and businesses are

involved in these endeavors. Simply put, the people of the State have said it is OK to talk about and practice the traits of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

Practicing the principles of character goes beyond the schools too. In Albuquerque, and now other communities are picking up the idea, an entirely new program is being launched: Character Counts in the Workplace, sponsored by regional chambers of commerce. The stated goal of this program is to put the six pillars of character into the workplace “so we can count on one another to make principle-based decisions rather than merely expedient ones throughout the New Mexico business community.” As one New Mexican said, “People may not believe what you say, but they do believe what you do.”

Practicing the principles of good character is for everyone. I am immensely proud of what the people of New Mexico have done in 4 short years to awaken one another to the benefits of practicing good character traits. It is an effort that has brought all ages of people together, in all professions, to work a little harder to bring civility in our relationships with one another.

I would like to close with some words from His Excellency, Michael J. Sheehan, Archbishop of Santa Fe, in his letter endorsing the Character Counts program in the 21 Catholic schools in the Santa Fe Archdiocese:

Our Catholic schools assist parents in their efforts to help their children understand that God commands us to be honest, just, truthful, faithful, kind, generous, and forgiving. Character Counts provides the common language for citizens of all ages and all walks of life. Every educator knows the key to an effective education is consistency and repetition—from the pulpit to the boardroom to the playground. Let us be consistent with our brothers and sisters in our Nation’s community by integrating this common language into our everyday encounters with our children, our families, our colleagues.

Mr. President, National Character Counts Week represents an important time to set aside and observe the thousands of local programs and individuals who believe we can endorse and practice six pillars of good character. It is families, schools, civic and social organizations, local and State governments, businesses, and ordinary citizens who are participating in this movement. We, too, can be a part of this movement by supporting this resolution.

So, I could not be more pleased, even thrilled at what is happening in my State. I am hopeful within a couple of years we will be able to measure the positive consequences that we think are going to flow from building these six words into the everyday vocabulary of our children, incorporating them just in the ordinary teaching every day so that trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship might become a way of life. If

ever we needed change in that direction and help in promulgating character, it is now. In fact, it is long past due.

I am very hopeful that we are giving parents, children, teachers and the entire community a vehicle to promote better character and build character around these six very, very acceptable words that I have repeated at least once or twice—three times here on the floor. That is the essence of the Character Counts Program. Get these six pillars into the classroom, into the daily vocabulary, into the teaching—those ways that are used to teach our young people. And then use innovation and creativity to instill them.

I urge my colleagues to join us again this year in cosponsoring and adopting "National Character Counts Week." Thank you.

I know other Senators are waiting to be heard, so I will yield especially to my friend who is a cosponsor and one of the early founders of this coalition in the Senate, the distinguished Senator BENNETT from the State of Utah.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I want to thank my friend from New Mexico not only for his statement here today but for his leadership on this issue. I remember, when he first called me several Congresses ago and said he was getting involved in this and would I be interested in helping him, I was delighted to do what I could to help him because when the Senator from New Mexico leads out, helping is always pretty easy. With him as the leader, things always move well and strongly and in the right direction.

I can report that in the State of Utah we have not been as focused on the six pillars of character as they have been in the State of New Mexico, but we have not been lax in this particular area.

1996 was Utah's centennial year, 100 years since we had achieved statehood, and the Governor of Utah, in the spirit of the Character Counts initiative, called for a discussion of values. He created the Governors Commission on Centennial Values. As a result of that creation and the discussion that occurred, we now have in Utah 12 values in common that we talk about. I will read them and get them into the RECORD so we can understand how this effort to get character into the school curriculum and into the lives of our young people is going forward all across the country.

In Utah we value families. We value a commitment to our community and country. We value integrity. We value honesty. We value respect for self and others. We value lifelong learning. We value caring service. We value work. We value personal responsibility. We value respect for the rule of law. We value justice, fairness and freedoms, and we value respect for the environment.

Those are the 12 values that came out of the Governor's Centennial Com-

mission, and I believe they are certainly compatible with the six pillars of character that are supported by the Character Counts coalition. Perhaps now that our centennial is past and we are into 1997, we can meld these two efforts and get the Character Counts curriculum into the schools in the manner that the Senator from New Mexico has done so well in his own State.

Mr. President, I am honored to be one of the cosponsors of this effort, to join with my friend from New Mexico and to recognize, once again, his leadership and service in this because this has been, for him, not just something to make a speech about on the Senate floor and then forget; it has been something that he has pursued with vigor in his own State and kept alive on the part of the rest of us, who joined with him in the initial effort.

I hope that all Senators will recognize that this is not just motherhood and apple pie, a quick thing to talk about and then move on. "Our Nation is indeed at risk," to use the phrase that came out of the educational effort done during the Presidency of President Reagan, and headed by an educator from Utah, Terence Bell. It is at risk not only because our young people have deficiencies in their education in technical skills, it is at risk because there are deficiencies of the moral education of our young people. We have to have something like Character Counts to help us move in the direction of reducing that risk. I am honored to be a part of the effort and pledge that I will do what I can to see to it that the Senator from New Mexico and the others in this program are given the support they need.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I thank the Chair and my colleague from New Mexico. I congratulate him for this resolution focusing on character. He has been a leader since his election in 1972. Again, he has demonstrated that today with this resolution on character. I am pleased to join as a cosponsor of the resolution. It is an effort to focus national attention on values and morality, and to try to instill in our young people and our older people, as well, a sense that character does count.

This is in line with legislation that Senator SANTORUM and I have introduced on abstinence. I have found that the issue of abortion, the pro-life/pro-choice controversy, is the most divisive issue facing this country since slavery, and that one way to try to pull the country together is to focus on issues where we all agree. When you talk about premarital sex among teenagers, leading to unintended pregnancies, and therefore ultimately abortions, we can all agree that such behavior must be discouraged. That is an effort in a specific, targeted way to try to develop and promote character. So I am pleased to join with my distinguished colleague on that important subject.

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, today I join my friend and colleague,

Senator DOMENICI in cosponsoring a resolution to designate a week in October as "National Character Counts Week."

This will mark the fourth consecutive year that we have considered such a resolution to honor the Character Counts movement. It is small gesture, but a meaningful one all the same. By recognizing this program, Congress is making an important statement about both the value of character education and the state of our values. We are saying affirmatively that our public schools can and must play a central role in shaping the character and values of our children. And we are saying that this kind of commitment, a commitment to the principles undergirding the Character Counts Program, is needed now more than ever.

The reality, Mr. President, is that the state of our values is not well. The American people are deeply concerned about the abundant evidence they see of a real moral breakdown in our society—so much so that polls taken over the last few years routinely show that the public is more worried about the country's moral decline than its economic decline.

What's driving this concern, which many of us in this Chamber share, is an understanding that our growing inability to make moral distinctions, to draw lines about right and wrong and set boundaries about what is acceptable behavior, is having real consequences. We are recognizing that this moral breakdown is contributing to and exacerbating some of our society's most profound social ills, such as the rising tide of ever more random and vicious violence committed by ever more younger killers, the disintegration of the family, the crisis of teenage illegitimacy, the coarsening of our culture, and the loss of civility in our polity and our everyday lives.

More and more these days there is a sense that our country is spiraling out of control, and at the root of that feeling is what might be called a values vacuum. The traditional transmitters of values that we have depended on for generations to build character and bind our moral safety net have lost much of their power. One of those transmitters is the family, which is under enormous economic pressure these days and is prey to divorce and other forms of breakdown. Another transmitter is the community and the loose connection of local civic institutions we refer to as civil society, which has weakened to the point that an entire movement has sprung up to renew it.

Then there are our public schools. For generations the public school system was the backbone of our democracy, where children were not just taught what is good grammar but what it means to be a good citizen, and where children of all backgrounds were versed in a common set of core values. But in recent years public schools have increasingly lost that mission, and too often shied away from questions of values and the formation of character. In

the eyes of many families, some schools might as well had signs out front declaring them value-neutral zones.

What is perhaps most disturbing about this trend is that the values vacuum the schools have helped create is being filled more and more these days by the electronic media and the frequently destructive messages it is bombarding our children with. The collective force of television, movies, music, and video games is so influential that many parents I talk to feel as if they are in a competition with the culture to raise their children and give them strong values. The character traits they are trying to instill in their children are being openly contradicted by the bulk of the messages kids are receiving about the acceptability and the inconsequentiality of casual sex, the contempt for all forms of authority, and the appropriateness of settling a dispute by putting a bullet through the other person's temple. The result is the prevalence of what one leading expert on child development calls the culture of disrespect.

The media's inability to make moral distinctions and draw lines about right and wrong makes it all the more important for us to strengthen our traditional values transmitters. And that is why the Character Counts movement deserves all the support we can provide. Rebuilding our families and our communities will be a long, painstaking process. But reviving the role of schools in helping our children learn about the fundamentals of character is a challenge we can meet easily and quickly.

In fact, the Character Counts program has already done the hard part, identifying the core values and principles that we can all agree that we want our schools to instill and reinforce in our children. The question of whose values? that is often asked has been answered, with a consensus behind our values—trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring for others, and citizenship.

I am heartened to know that the Character Counts program is rapidly spreading through communities across the country, and I am particularly proud that my State of Connecticut has made a long-term commitment to bring character education into every school district in the State. With the aid of a \$250,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education last year, the State took the first major step toward that goal by selecting four communities for funding to introduce the Character Counts Program on a districtwide basis.

Some Connecticut schools have already embraced this program on their own, and I can report to my colleagues that it is bearing fruit. Let me offer one compelling example. Last year a nine-year-old from the town of Torrington named Joshua Dy found an envelope on the ground that contained three \$100 bills. Joshua said he initially

thought of keeping the money for himself, but he then thought of what he learned in Character Counts at the Southwest School and from his father about honesty and integrity, and decided the right thing would be to turn the money over to the police. Joshua was rewarded for his honesty when the police returned the money to him after no one claimed it and when President Clinton saluted his good character with a letter of congratulations.

Mr. President, I would encourage my colleagues to find their own ways to reward and recognize the good deeds that are germinating from the seeds of Character Counts. A good place to start is with this resolution, which will help raise public awareness of this valuable values program and make Character Counts really count. Let me close by praising Senator DOMENICI for his leadership on this issue, and by asking that my remarks be placed in the appropriate place in the RECORD to accompany the Character Counts resolution. •

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with the distinguished Senator from New Mexico and a bipartisan group of my colleagues in cosponsoring this Senate resolution designating October 19-25 as "National Character Counts Week."

This morning, like every morning before it and every morning to come, young Americans are headed off to learn their three "R's"—reading, writing, and arithmetic—in our Nation's schools. But as we all know, the school day involves more than just the transmission of facts or the relaying of concepts. It's also about character. In the best classrooms in America our children are given the opportunity to learn and practice basic character traits such as sharing, cooperation, and respect.

The Character Counts initiative calls on all Americans to embrace the development of six attributes—trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship—as a fundamental aspect of our children's education and as a critically important means of strengthening our Nation. The lessons our young people learn as children are the ones that will stay with them the rest of their lives. As Eleanor Roosevelt once said: "Character building begins in our infancy, and continues until death."

We live in a time when teenage pregnancy and juvenile crime are spiraling out of control. A recent poll suggests that two-thirds of Americans believe most people can't be trusted, half say most people would cheat others if they could and in the end are only looking out for themselves. These statistics and the seeming erosion in the basic norms of civility, even among our Nation's children, are ample evidence of the need for programs that promote character development.

No one would argue that Character Counts is a panacea for these complex problems. First and foremost, we need

better education, stronger families, and healthy doses of individual responsibility.

Clearly the primary obligation for the building of our children's values and belief systems lies with our Nation's families. There is only so much government can and should do. But, with parents being forced to spend more and more time out of the house, our Nation's schools can and should do everything they can to work with parents in helping to build character among America's children.

There is nothing inappropriate or heavyhanded about teaching character in our schools. These programs don't impose morality or any one group's world view. These programs teach honesty, courage, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship, and loyalty, attributes that I believe all Americans agree upon.

These principles transcend religion, race, philosophy, and even political affiliation. For those Americans who share the goal of energizing our democracy and strengthening our Nation's character these initiatives are simply common sense.

What's more, these programs garner tangible benefits. In Connecticut, the Southwest Elementary School in Torrington implemented a character education program in September of last year and has witnessed positive effects as a result of its efforts. Attendance is up, students are more respectful toward their teachers, and school administrators are convinced that Character Counts is responsible. The school engages parents in the effort, who along with educators and the students themselves, love the program.

Additionally, this year in Connecticut, the Leadership Committee of Character Counts will undertake a comprehensive training program to qualify 35 instructors to educate students about the importance of strength of character. These instructors will bring the ideals stressed by Character Counts directly to the students of Connecticut, reaching 100,000 students by year's end. While character education may not be a magical solution to all of America's problems, it represents a positive effort to make a real difference in our children's lives. Character development programs for our children strengthen our lives, our communities, and our Nation as a whole.

I commend my friend and colleague from New Mexico for all of his work in this area. And I invite all my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to join us in supporting character education as a vital means of molding better individuals, strengthening families, and creating a responsible American citizenry.

Mr. KEMPTHORNE. Mr. President, I rise today to express my strong support for the National Character Counts Week resolution submitted by my esteemed colleague, Senator DOMENICI. I have cosponsored similar resolutions for the past 3 years, and am honored to

have the opportunity to do so again this year.

At a time when we are exposed to a constant stream of violence, profanity, and immorality—both through the media and in every day life—the issue of character is of vital importance. Those of us in this Chamber spend a great deal of time trying to develop ways to improve the Nation. I can think of few things we could do to better achieve this goal than to emphasize the importance of character to younger generations.

Those of us in positions of leadership, especially in the Government, have a special duty when it comes to character. Whether we realize it or not, we are role models and we have a duty to demonstrate those same attributes of character—trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, justice and fairness, caring, and civic virtue and citizenship—which National Character Counts Week highlights. Unfortunately, far too many Americans have come to believe, wrongly in most cases, that these qualities no longer exist in the Government. I urge all of my colleagues to begin today to make that extra effort to show the people we serve that the faith they demonstrated when they voted for us has not been misplaced. In the words of President George Washington, "Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair."

Mr. President, I recently chaired an Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee hearing in which the issue of character was prominent. During the hearing I was deeply disturbed to hear that the lack of character, values, and discipline is making it harder and harder for the Armed Forces to recruit the high quality people we need to serve in our military. Testimony supplied at the hearing indicated that an ever-increasing number of potential recruits are unacceptable, in terms of ethics, education, and values, for the armed services. I am not talking about difficult kids who simply lack discipline, the military has always done a fine job handling those recruits. I am talking about young people who have no respect for authority, no respect for their peers, no respect for our society, and often, no respect for themselves. As a result, they lack basic values such as compassion, honesty, and integrity. Our military commanders cannot be expected to instill those kind of values in individuals who have lacked them throughout their entire lives. That process must begin at birth and in the home.

Mr. President, with this resolution, we are taking a step forward in trying to teach younger generations about the importance of character. I am pleased to note that schools, churches, and civic organizations around the Nation are also seizing the initiative on this important issue. But our efforts, whether on the national or local level, must not end here. Actually, to be more precise, our efforts must not begin here. While there are certainly things we can do as a government, or as a community, to teach character to

young people, these lessons must begin at home. We cannot hope to improve the overall character of the Nation unless the fundamental values described in National Character Counts Week are instilled in the home. No amount of moral instruction from outside the home can replace the guidance of a loving and supportive family.

Recognizing a national week to stress the importance of character is but a small step in addressing the crisis of ethics the Nation faces. At the same time, it is an important step which I believe all of us should support. I would like to thank Senator DOMENICI for his continued leadership on National Character Counts Week, and urge my colleagues to cosponsor the resolution.

NOTICE OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Rules and Administration will meet in SR-301, Russell Senate Office Building, on Thursday, March 20, 1997, at 9:30 a.m. to hold an oversight hearing on the operations and budget of the Congressional Research Service and the Library of Congress.

For further information concerning this hearing, please contact Ed Edens of the Rules Committee staff at 224-6678.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be allowed to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 13, 1997, at 9 a.m. in SR-328A to receive testimony regarding agriculture research reauthorization.

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

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet at 10 p.m. on Thursday, March 13, 1997, to receive testimony from the unified commanders on their military strategies and operational requirements in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 1998 and the future years defense program.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be granted permission to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 13, for purposes of conducting a Full Committee Business Meeting which is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. The purpose of this Business Meeting is to consider S. 104, to amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be granted permission to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 13, for purposes of conducting a Subcommittee on National Parks, Historic Preservation, and Recreation hearing which is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. The purpose of this oversight hearing is to address the future of the National Park System and to identify and discuss needs, requirements and innovative programs that will ensure the Park Service will continue to meet its many responsibilities well into the next century.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Finance Committee requests unanimous consent to conduct a hearing on Thursday, March 13, 1997, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in room 215 Dirksen.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Finance Committee requests unanimous consent to conduct a hearing on Thursday, March 13, 1997, beginning at 2 p.m. in room SD-215.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. MCCONNELL. The Committee on the Judiciary requests unanimous consent to hold an executive business meeting on Thursday, March 13, 1997, at 10 a.m., in room 226 of the Senate Dirksen Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent on behalf of the Government Affairs Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services to meet on Thursday, March 13, at 9:30 a.m. for a hearing on "National Missile Defense and Prospects of United States—Russia ABM Treaty Accommodation".

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

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Labor and Human Resources be authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 13, 1997, at 10 a.m.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 13, 1997 at 2:30 p.m. to hold a closed hearing on the nomination of Anthony Lake to be Director of Central Intelligence.