

would have denied many students access to the student loans necessary for their enrollment in school.

Based on the Department's struggle to meet its responsibility to our nation's students, concerned members of the House and Senate have worked diligently to prevent another crisis in student access to college loans. Not all colleges and universities participate in the Direct Lending program, and the interest rate index adjustments supported by the 1993 Budget threaten to eliminate private lenders from the student loan market. Without the aid of private lenders, many students will be left without necessary financial assistance. S. 1882 rejects Clinton's repeated attempts to strangle consumer choice by revising the interest rate index on student loans, and improves the service and accountability standards of guaranty agencies who participate in the FFELP program.

The guaranty agency model included in this bill directs agencies to utilize the advantages of the Internet and other technological advances in order to increase the speed and efficiency of the student loan process. S. 1882 also increases the financial responsibility guaranty agencies must bear when a student loan goes into default. All lending organizations—public and private—should be held up to high standards of performance and fiscal integrity. By increasing agency accountability, this bill makes sure that students across the country have access to qualified, responsible lending agencies. By streamlining the loan process and weeding out irresponsible lenders, S. 1882 strengthens the ability of reliable agencies to offer low-interest student loans.

S. 1182 increases institutional accountability not only for lenders, but for institutions of higher education as well. A solid primary and secondary education is the base upon which future academic success is built, and a highly qualified teaching force is an essential component of a child's educational foundation. S. 1182 raises the bar with which we measure teachers by holding institutions of higher education that prepare teachers for classroom instruction responsible for the caliber of teachers they graduate.

From early childhood through post-secondary school, a child has no greater resource than a knowledgeable, skillful teacher in the classroom, and S. 1882 holds both states and institutions of higher education responsible for placing the best teachers in our public schools. Through the creation of Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants, S. 1882 focuses on state-based reform of the teacher certification process to ensure that new teachers are qualified both in instructional skills and the subject matter which they teach, and to hold institutions of higher education accountable for properly preparing teachers for the classroom. These grants also give states the flexibility to financially reward teachers whose

students have high levels of academic performance, and the authority to remove unqualified teachers from the classroom. In addition, S. 1882 allows states to develop alternative certification options for college graduates and capable individuals from other professional and occupational backgrounds who are interested in teaching.

Students face many other barriers in addition to cost when preparing for acceptance into a post-secondary school. Many first-generation and low-income students have educational needs that are not met by routine classroom instruction. S. 1882 provides support services and counseling programs for these students through the reauthorization of federal TRIO programs. For years, students across Kentucky have benefited from the Upward Bound program, which assists disadvantaged students in gaining entrance into higher education and completing a course of study. Unfortunately, many Upward Bound students are forced to choose between summer educational programs and part-time employment. S. 1882 will enable these students to pursue challenging academic programs by expanding Upward Bound to include summer work study. The Talent Search program is also expanded to introduce low-income students to careers in which students from disadvantaged backgrounds are under-represented. I am pleased that S. 1882 reauthorizes and strengthens these two programs which are highly valued by students throughout Kentucky.

The influence of institutions of higher education is felt far beyond the classroom as many colleges and universities are providing long-term leadership for communities undergoing an economic transition. In Kentucky, the higher education community has done an exemplary job of molding its curricula to meet the economic needs of the Commonwealth. The University of Kentucky and Louisville have established world-class research programs and have extended their community recruitment and outreach programs. Many of Kentucky's regional colleges and private schools are also implementing programs complimentary to the goals of excellence outlined by their home communities and the state government. Kentucky's community colleges and technical schools recently integrated their academic and training programs to create a seamless system of post-secondary education. Such efforts to achieve cooperation and quality in post-secondary education will produce great benefits for Kentucky students in the years to come.

By recognizing the inextricable link between future economic viability and higher education, Kentucky is a prime example of the direction in which higher education in the United States is headed. With this bill, we have the opportunity to open the doors of higher education to a greater number of students than ever before, at a time when post-secondary education is at a pre-

mium. As the summer draws to a close, and another school year is about to begin, I am pleased that ninety-five of my colleagues joined me in recognition of the important role education plays in shaping our nation's future by supporting S. 1882.●

AMERICA'S GAME HAS A NEW LEADER

●Mr. CONRAD. On July 9, 1998, Major League Baseball selected Bud Selig as its ninth Commissioner in the history of baseball.

After serving as the Chairman of Baseball's Executive Council for the last six years, the owners picked from their own ranks and bestowed the formal leadership mantle on Alan H. "Bud" Selig.

For the last 28 years, Bud has been the driving force behind major league baseball in Milwaukee, from bringing baseball back in 1970 to building a new convertible stadium to open in 2000.

In September of 1992, Bud was picked to fill the void created by the departure of Fay Vincent. From the day he took the reins of the Executive Council, he was faced with serious issues that had eluded solutions. The first task was securing a new collective bargaining agreement with the Players Association. That agreement is an essential element in the growing trust and cooperation that is now visible between the players and the owners.

If labor peace was not a big enough challenge, Bud was instrumental in securing a revenue sharing agreement, and in implementing the popular wild-card playoff system and interleague play that the fans have found very exciting and enthusiastically attend. All of these improvements have helped bring back fans in numbers that reflect a healing of the game after the strike.

Those accomplishments are truly important but they merely set the stage for the agenda items that await the ninth Commissioner of Baseball. Most people who follow baseball believe Bud will have to address several tough issues: realignment and scheduling; elimination of payroll disparity; and marketing and promotion of baseball both at home and internationally. This last issue is one that also provides an avenue to continue to work with the Players Association to grow the game in a way that the fans, the players and the owners benefit.

Bud was responsible for bringing Paul Beeston from the Toronto club into the management ranks of baseball as the Chief Operating Officer. With Paul to tend to the day to day operations in the new and reorganized New York offices, Bud will be free to focus on the important tasks that lie ahead. The challenges that Bud now faces will require him to draw on the legendary consensus building skills that he has so effectively used in the past to continue to provide the unified leadership that will put baseball on a path to move into the next century.

As a life long baseball fan, I wish him well.●

POSTAL WORKER RECOGNITION

● Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to say "thank you" to a most diverse collection of government employees, unified by many factors but most of all, a commitment to service. Thank you for the professionalism that you display which has allowed us to come to expect value, reliability, and uniformity from one of the world's largest businesses.

Who are these employees? They're truck drivers, engineers, janitors, accountants, detectives, customer service personnel, and letter carriers. They're United States Postal Employees.

The United States Postal Service is a business with an unusual pedigree, even though we commonly recognize the "post office" as a traditional government entity. Yet while its origins can be traced to the origins of our country, the Postal Service as we know it today is only 27 years old. USPS went through an extensive revamping in the late 1960s and early 70s. The Post Office Department was removed from the President's Cabinet and converted into a non-profit government corporation. The result was an effective elimination of politicians from the management of postal affairs.

Congress passed the Postal Reorganization Act which created the new United States Postal Service on July 1, 1971. This month, we recognize an organization able to modernize, while maintaining the fundamental unifying factors required of such a massive global organization.

USPS has a unique set of privileges and responsibilities which serve to ensure uniform service and stable prices for mail delivery throughout the United States. The Chair of the USPS Board of Governors announced in late June that there would be no postal rate increase for 1998. The next rate increase will take effect January 10, 1999. At that time the price of a First-Class letter will increase by one penny, to 33 cents.

USPS last increased rates on January 1, 1995. When the new rates take effect next year, it will be the second straight rate adjustment below inflation, in effect cutting the real cost of a First-Class stamp by seven percent since 1995. That makes the cost of a First-Class letter among the lowest in the industrialized world—a feat managed without taxpayer subsidies. In Japan, the cost of a First-Class letter is \$.57, in Great Britain it is \$.42 and in Germany it is \$.62.

Yet the success of USPS in its ability to reorganize, modernize, and compete in a global marketplace is due to each individual postal employee, because that's what comprises successful business operations—great employees.●

TRIBUTE TO JUSTIN S. MORRILL ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, 1998 is an important year for Vermont and the nation as it marks the 100th anniversary of the death of a great statesman, Senator Justin S. Morrill. Senator Morrill was a remarkable man; his authorship of the Land-Grant College Act gave, and continues to give, millions of Americans the opportunity to pursue higher education. To recognize this accomplishment, the Stratford Historical Society is holding a symposium on July 16 and 17, 1998 to pay homage to Senator Morrill and his legacy.

Senator Morrill was one the most influential politicians in the mid-nineteenth century. During his 43 years in Congress, he introduced many innovative bills and worked to improve the lives of millions of Americans through higher education. The Land-Grant College Act provided public lands for agricultural colleges and, in turn, set the standard for American public universities. In addition to these accomplishments, Senator Morrill was also instrumental in the creation of the Washington Monument and the Library of Congress.

In fact, on November 4, 1997, I was honored to attend a ceremony at the Library of Congress to unveil a plaque in the Great Hall of the Jefferson Building honoring Senator Morrill. The plaque was presented to the Library on behalf of the people of Vermont by the Vermont Center for the Book, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Jefferson Building. The plaque honors the vital role that Senator Morrill played in making the Jefferson Building a reality.

Mr. President, Justin S. Morrill was a dedicated statesman who spent his life helping others. He revolutionized education and, as poet Robert Frost once noted, "For me there is no greater name in American education than that of Senator Justin Smith Morrill." Such an amazing man deserves recognition and, on this 100th anniversary of his death, I pay tribute to him and his accomplishments.●

HIGHER EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1998

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to H.R. 6, the higher education bill, and that the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate, all without further action or debate.

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

The Presiding Officer appointed Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. COATS, Mr. GREGG, Mr. FRIST, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. ENZI, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr.

DODD, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. REED conferees on the part of the Senate.

NATIONAL CRIMINAL HISTORY ACCESS AND CHILD PROTECTION ACT

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. 2294 introduced earlier today by Senator HATCH.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2294) to facilitate the exchange of criminal history records for noncriminal justice purposes, to provide for the decentralized storage of criminal history records, to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to facilitate the fingerprint checks authorized by that Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I have introduced the National Criminal History Access and Child Protection Act of 1998. I am pleased to have been joined by the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee, Senator LEAHY, as well as by Senator DEWINE and the distinguished Minority Leader, Senator DASCHLE, in introducing this legislation, which also has the support of the Administration.

This important legislation addresses a critical issue—the access to criminal history records for legitimate purposes other than use within the criminal justice system. These records are frequently used today for a wide variety of important purposes, such as employment background checks for child care workers, health care workers, elder care workers, teachers, school bus drivers, security guards, and bar applicants.

Few disagree with the use of criminal history records to ensure that those in important positions of trust with our children, elderly, and persons with disabilities do not have criminal backgrounds making such trust inappropriate or even dangerous. Yet, currently, policies and procedures on disseminating these records vary widely from state to state.

This legislation addresses this issue, by enacting what has come to be known as the Triple I (III) Compact. This proposed interstate and federal-state compact is supported by the Administration, the FBI, the Criminal Justice Information Advisory Policy Board, and all state criminal history repositories. It would establish "rules of the road" for the interstate sharing of criminal history records for non-criminal history purposes, such as background checks for employees who work with children or who are in otherwise sensitive jobs. The compact provides for state-to-state and federal-to-state sharing of records, through the Interstate Identification Index (III) and the National Fingerprint File (NFF).