

report reveals. We only have a day or two left in the 105th Congress. But if we need legislation—if we need greater resources to deal with this problem—I will do everything I can to make sure the 106th Congress addresses this issue and does what is necessary.

STRENGTHENING ABUSE AND NEGLECT COURTS ACT OF 1998

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a bill that will help protect America's abused children. The bill is called the Strengthening Abuse and Neglect Courts Act of 1998. I am very proud to be joined in this effort by Senators ROCKEFELLER, LANDRIEU, and CHAFEE. I realize that time is running very short in this Congress, so my co-sponsors and I will look to move this legislation during the next Congress.

Mr. President, last year Congress passed a historic piece of legislation called the Adoption and Safe Families Act. The purpose of that bill was to encourage safe and permanent family placements for abused and neglected children—and to decrease the amount of time they have to stay in the foster care system.

One of the requirements of that new law is more timely decisionmaking by the courts with regard to adoption and other permanent placements for children. The time-lines instituted by the Adoption and Safe Families Act, however, have increased the pressure on already overburdened courts that deal with abused and neglected children.

If we provide assistance to the courts—so that administrative efficiency and effectiveness are improved—the goals of last year's important legislation will be more readily achieved. Improved courts will help more children find permanent homes more quickly.

That is the purpose of the bill I am introducing today. While acknowledging that abuse and neglect courts are already committed to quality administration of justice, this bill would further strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the courts in the following five areas:

(1) Grants to State courts and local courts to automate data collection and tracking of proceedings in abuse and neglect courts. This would improve administrative efficiency and help evaluate overall performance—and it would also develop computer systems that can be replicated in other jurisdictions.

(2) Grants to reduce pending backlogs of abuse and neglect cases. These grants will go to courts in order to reduce and hopefully eliminate the backlog of cases awaiting disposition. The courts are given the flexibility to determine what method to use to reduce their backlog, but suggestions include establishing night court sessions, hiring additional court personnel or extending the courts operating hours.

(3) Development of "good practice" standards for agency attorneys. This would improve the quality of represen-

tation for children in the abuse and neglect system to ensure that their best interests are considered.

(4) Improved training (and cross-trainings) for judges, abuse and neglect attorneys, and court personnel. In this, as in so many areas, it's crucial that people with a special task receive special training. This bill would partially reimburse States for training of judges, judicial personnel, agency attorney's and attorneys representing children and parents in abuse and neglect proceedings. It would also help fund cross-training between court and agency.

(5) Technical assistance for the development of and education on "good practice" standards for attorneys practicing in abuse and neglect proceedings. The bill authorizes technical assistance funding to support abuse and neglect courts in the implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act.

(5) Expansion of the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program into underserved areas. The CASA Program has proven to be effective in ensuring that children in the foster care system are protected and receive appropriate services. This bill would help CASA expand its programs in the 15 largest urban areas and develop multi-jurisdictional programs in under-served rural areas, so that more children receive the benefit of their services.

When we passed the Adoption and Safe Families Act last year, I said that the bill is a good start, but that Congress will have to do more to make sure that every child has the opportunity to live in a safe, stable, loving and permanent home. One of the essential ingredients in this process is an efficiently operating court system. After all, that's where a lot of delays occur—for children who need permanent homes. The courts have been neglected throughout the years and while other areas of child welfare have been emphasized and funded, the courts have been left out of the process almost entirely.

It is my hope that with the introduction of this bill, we will start to change that syndrome—and make sure that courts will finally receive the funding and training they need to make a positive difference in the lives of some of America's most at-risk young people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is reminded of the 5-minute rule.

Mr. DEWINE. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

RETIREMENT OF DAN COATS

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, at this desk on the floor of the Senate, I am surrounded by Indiana—the senior Senator from Indiana on my left, the junior Senator from Indiana on my right. Together, they have come to reflect the character of their sober, peaceful, and productive section of middle America. So close are the two Senators to one another, almost alone among Members of this body, they share offices in

the State of Indiana, they share a strong and calm temperament, and they share a commitment to the people they represent and to the people of the United States.

When this Congress adjourns in a few short hours, however, we will be losing one of those Senators, DAN COATS. DAN COATS has grown in wisdom and in the respect that his fellow Senators have for him in each of the 10 years during which he has served in the Senate—10 years that seem to me, in retrospect, to be all too short. With DAN COATS, what you see is what you get, a man who lives and defends and projects solid American values, a love of family, a love of country, a love of God, a man who works hard, a man whose convictions are strong and unshakeable but who combines with those convictions a willingness to listen to views different from his own and to reach accommodations on matters of policy when those accommodations do not shake his solid philosophical foundation.

During the course of his 10 years in the Senate, DAN COATS has become a good friend. I do not believe I can say that he is my closest friend in the Senate, nor I his. I can say, however, that I will greatly miss his calm good humor, his ability to get to the central point of any debate over policy or political philosophy, his rich dedication to the Constitution of the United States, to this body, and to the friends he has made in this body.

We are only 100 men and women in the Senate, Mr. President. We see a great deal of one another, and we see ourselves and our colleagues under great stress and under high pressures. As a consequence, it is very difficult for any of us to hide the vital features of our character or our personality from one another. DAN COATS, I must say, has never attempted to hide anything about his character or about his personality, and with me and with all of us it has worn well. He is the kind of individual whom you like and respect more and more with each passing day, and it is for just that reason that even if this Congress ends up by accomplishing many of the purposes that each of us as individuals set out to accomplish at the beginning of this Congress, we will still go home with an empty heart, knowing that those of us who return in January will return without the daily advice, counsel, and friendship of a magnificent U.S. Senator, DAN COATS of Indiana.

CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, there is an old saying that "where there is a will, there is a way." That is very true of this Congress.

Congress can work together when it wants to get a job done, when Members focus on resolving issues rather than sound bites for the nightly news. I was pleased for example, to have worked with Senators BENNETT, HATCH, DODD,

and many other on complex computer issues in the Y2K readiness bill, which we were able to pass without objection in the Senate.

It is unfortunate that sometimes when Congress quietly and effectively gets its job done, there is little press interest. So, for a moment I want to draw attention to the child nutrition bill, which Congress passed by working together.

I want to pull everyone's attention away from the maelstrom to thank Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle and their staffs for a job well done on the child nutrition bill.

At conference with the House, I asked that this child nutrition bill be named in honor of Congressman BILL GOODLING. The motion was immediately and unanimously accepted. For years he has worked to improve these programs. This will be his last reauthorization effort and we will miss his touch and his leadership the next time around.

I want to also thank Lynn Selmsner who has been Chairman GOODLING's chief nutrition advisor for years. She has worked hard on these issues and deserves a great deal of credit.

The Democratic conferees, Congressman MARTINEZ of California and Congressman BILL CLAY of Missouri, and their staffs, greatly contributed to this effort and kept the interests of children front and center.

On the Senate side we worked together as a team. That is an even greater compliment than normal considering all the other issues facing the country.

Of course, Chairman LUGAR set the bipartisan course and carefully included all of us in the process. He has extended to me every courtesy and is a great chairman who is tough but fair to all Members. His chief counsel, Dave Johnson, has done, as he has always done in the past, an outstanding job from a legal and policy standpoint.

I switched places with my good friend Senator HARKIN a couple years ago. I took his job as ranking member on the nutrition subcommittee and he took mine as ranking member on the full Agriculture Committee. Senator HARKIN is a fighter for children and these programs and Iowa should be proud of his accomplishments.

Mark Halverson, his chief counsel on the committee, has been his nutrition advisor for years and handles these matter with great skill.

Senator MCCONNELL is chairman of the nutrition subcommittee and we have worked together for years to help improve and strengthen these programs. I was pleased that the Kentucky and Iowa child care pilot projects were made permanent by this bill. Dave Hovermale has done a superb job on these issues.

The third Republican Conferee, Senator COCHRAN, is also the Chairman of the Agriculture Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. That is a lot of clout and it was well used to

strengthen these child nutrition programs. I want to compliment Senator COCHRAN's agriculture staff person, Hunt Shipman, who has worked on these issues for years and has done a tremendous job. Senator COCHRAN, with my full support when I was chairman, helped to create the School Food Service Management Institute. I am pleased that this bill increases funding for that Institute and makes it permanent.

I want to also thank Ed Barron of my staff who has advised me on nutrition issues and legislation for almost twelve years. I know that Senators on both sides of the aisle seek his advice on nutrition legislation.

I also want to thank Michelle Barrett, who is on my staff, for helping out regarding these nutrition issues.

USDA Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services Under Secretary Shirley Watkins has done a marvelous job in promoting child nutrition and getting these programs and Department of Agriculture moving forward. The President made a marvelous choice in sending her name to the Senate. I greatly appreciate her leadership and dedication. Her deputy, Julie Paradis, distinguished herself for years as a lead nutrition staff person for the House Agriculture Committee. She has done a wonderful job at USDA and I greatly enjoy working with her. USDA's "Chairman's Hunger Initiative for Learning and Development" contains important recommendations to the Congress and the country and was helpful in this legislative process.

Also, I have appreciated the valuable input provided by the American School Food Service Association and their counsel Marshall Matz. Their Legislative Issue Papers and careful analysis of these matters makes our job easier.

The Food Research and Action Center helps galvanize grassroots supports for these nutrition efforts. Their excellent report, "Schools Out, Let's Eat," on the Child and Adult Care Food Program presented excellent examples and information.

I appreciate the efforts of my fellow Vermonter Dr. Dick Narkewitz who was chair of a major WIC advisory panel this year. I have always valued his advice and counsel on WIC and other infant health issues.

I also want to mention the valuable assistance of the National Association of WIC Directors and their executive director Doug Greenaway. They have always made solid recommendations to the Congress.

The Food and Nutrition Service is an extremely well run agency and has very dedicated, professional and intelligent staff who do an outstanding job for this nation. Simple stated, FNS is top-notch.

Also, Joe Richardson and Jean Jones of the CRS have provided Congress with extremely helpful information and advice over the year—24 hours a day if needed. I know that Members on both sides of the aisle have the highest regard for them.

Also, working with Chairman LUGAR on nutrition issues is Danny Spellacy who is a rising star within the ranks.

Every four or five years the Congress takes a very careful look at its child nutrition programs. These programs are important to America's children and thus are important to America's future. Many teachers tell me they were surprised to learn how many children come to school hungry. There could be many reasons for this: extreme poverty, a dysfunctional family, child abuse or other nightmares heaped on young children.

Ed Barron's mother, Dorothy Barron, works for the Florida City Elementary School in Florida City, Florida. This school is in the last town before you hit Key Largo. She advises that many of the students come to school hungry. The school meals programs are essential for these children to be able to concentrate on learning.

Without school breakfast and lunch programs, many children would never stand a chance because they would just get hungrier during the school day. This bill will improve these programs and make it easier for school food services to provide lunches and breakfasts. The bill also includes a provision from a bill introduced by Senator JOHNSON which would authorize a study of the benefits of providing "universal" breakfasts to grade school children.

The idea, and it is a good one, is to test how offering breakfasts to all children affects academic performance, test scores, truancy, tardiness and other matters. Preliminary studies have shown positive effects. While this bill does not provide mandatory funding for this study as was in the Senate bill, it does authorize such funding.

The WIC program is another great idea and program which is continued by the bill. Congress has rallied behind this program for a very good reason. Research shows that enhanced nutritional assistance for pregnant women greatly increases the health of newborn children. Indeed, participation in WIC was shown to greatly reduce the incidence of newborns placed in neonatal intensive care.

WIC not only improves the health of those children but greatly reduces federal costs associated with Medicaid payments for that intensive care. The Congress has worked together to fund the WIC program and to improve its operation. Chairman COCHRAN and the ranking Member, Senator BUMPERS, of the Agriculture Appropriations subcommittee are to be commended for their continuous support for these programs.

I am very proud to have worked with my colleagues to use cost containment to put well over one million additional pregnant women, infants and children on the program each year at no extra cost to taxpayers. We did this through an extremely simple idea—the government was required to buy infant formula at the lowest cost possible, not at retail cost. This saves over \$1.5 billion

per year. This reauthorization bill continues and strengthens that cost containment language.

The WIC Farmers' Market Program is also continued and expanded in this bill. Mary Carlson was president of the National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs this year and helped me on this reauthorization effort. I appreciate that she flew down from Vermont to Washington to help with some of the discussions with staff. We were able to include some of her suggestions in this bill. Also, on the appropriations front, it does appear that Congress will provide \$15 million for the WIC Farmers' Market program this year. On the national level, this new funding level will allow more states to participate in this highly successful program.

I am very proud that the WIC Farmers' Market Program, called Farm-to-Family in Vermont, got its start in legislation that I introduced in the late 1980s. The program promotes consumption of fresh produce among low income families participating in WIC, helps farmers, helps communities set up farmers' markets, and helps teach families how to best use fresh fruits and vegetables. Fruits, vegetables, and other farm products provide a healthy supplement to the dairy products, juices, and fortified cereals included in the WIC package.

In addition to being strongly liked by participating families, farmers also like this program. A USDA study showed that WIC recipients continue to buy at farmer's markets long after they stopped getting WIC benefits. In Vermont, more than 200 farmers currently participate in the WIC Farmers' Market Program.

A participating farmer in New Hampshire said that "the program enabled us to keep farming. Without it we would have been forced to stop." A Massachusetts farmer said: "it made it possible for our small town farmers' market to get off the ground during its first year."

Mary Carlson has advised me that this program has had a significant role in helping Vermont communities set up farmers' markets. In Vermont, nearly 5,000 families participate in the program at over 30 farmers' markets. This program leverages a very modest federal investment and helps farmers, farmers' markets and families throughout the nation.

This bill also expands the reach of a nutrition program that is very important for homeless children living in emergency shelters. I hosted a hearing on this matter in 1994 and His Eminence Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua of Philadelphia testified about the need for this program. It provides food for young children living in homeless shelters and has been of great help to agencies and communities facing homelessness among children. The bill blends the food program for homeless children into the child care food program. I anticipate that this will mean that all

current shelters will be able to continue to participate and that additional children could be served.

I take a great personal interest in this program and urge the Department to provide its benefits to as many needy children as possible. His Eminence sent me a letter and survey results regarding this program late last year.

I will request a report from USDA on how this provision is implemented during the next year and will contact sponsors including the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to make sure the program continues to operate effectively. I appreciate the interest of USDA in this program.

The reauthorization bill also expands after-school child care programs allowing parents to find and keep jobs. These programs are becoming more and more important in Vermont and around the nation and I am very pleased that this bill provides additional funding and makes significant improvements in this area.

The bill also expands the summer food service program by making it easier for sponsors to serve more children. Robert Dostis, with the Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger, has done a wonderful job in Vermont promoting this program as well as the school breakfast program. Their "Report on Childhood Hunger in Vermont" brought these child nutrition issues to life. The bill expands the ability of churches and other nonprofit organizations to offer summer food service program meals to more children.

Jo Busha, head of Vermont's child nutrition programs, has been recognized for her tremendous efforts in getting more schools to offer a breakfast program. I salute her and Robert Dostis for their work on behalf of Vermont's children.

I know that the Vermont School Food Service Association will be pleased that this bill will reduce red tape and burdensome school lunch rules. The bill lets them get their job done.

The bill continues a WIC breast feeding promotion program to encourage breast feeding instead of the use of infant formula. Working with Senator HARKIN, we were able to include the program in the 1989 reauthorization of child nutrition programs.

The bill also continues a program requested by former Majority Leader Robert Dole. This program helps assist children with disabilities to participate in the school lunch program and is a very good idea. I always appreciated Senator Dole's counsel on these issues.

The reauthorization bill also continues funding for the national information clearinghouse which provides local communities and states with information about gleaning, food sources, and programs that help communities and families help themselves. This clearinghouse has worked out very well and I want to commend World Hunger Year for the tremendous job they have done

with this program. I know that my good friend Chairman BEN GILMAN has been a long time friend of World Hunger Year and that he, and many others, appreciate what they have done over the years.

The bill also extends federal funding for local programs which integrate nutrition and farming education into the regular school curricula. This program is scored as a mandatory program and I certainly hope that USDA actually funds it. I have suggested more than once that USDA consider the Foodworks: Common Roots program in New York and Vermont. They have been commended in newspaper accounts and by the local principals as a great example of schools integrating the teaching of nutrition and farming into the regular school curricula. For example, students would design and plant a garden with seeds for food grown in colonial days. Young children would use simple math to plot out where to place seeds while advanced classes might mathematically describe the spiral of corn kernels on the cob.

Children could be taught about historic farming techniques and how they are relevant today. The hands on gardening experience brings learning to life and helps make math, science and history more interesting.

I introduced a child nutrition bill last year—the Child Nutrition Initiatives Act, S. 1556—that contained a number of proposals that are included in this bill. Most important—in light of recent efforts to encourage work—are the after-school, and the child care, food programs. Adequate after-school care for school-age children is critical to permit parents to work. More schools should be able to offer after-school food programs.

I also cosponsored Senator LUGAR's child nutrition reauthorization bill. I hope that some time in the future we can provide assured, mandatory funding for the WIC farmers' market program as I proposed in my bill. By specifying exact annual caps we could assure funding for years while, at the same time, exercise complete control over the size of the program. This approach follows a recommendation of the National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs.

I had also hoped that this reauthorization would provide additional financial support to help cover transportation costs for every rural area—75 cents per child, per day—for the summer food service program. S. 1556 also would have helped create more summer food service programs, by providing grants to cover one-time costs associated with setting up a summer food service program.

I will work in the future to include some of these ideas into the next reauthorization bill. I now look forward to the President signing this important bill into law.