child. Our mission is to ensure that our children are among the best educated in the world, and we will not be dissuaded from accomplishing that goal by any amount of opposition.

Today, we are introducing the Educational Opportunities and Excellence Act of 1999 to build on the Successes of the 105th Congress, and to jump start the much needed debate on increasing the ability of our nation's children to obtain a quality education.

The Educational Opportunities and Excellence Act of 1999 is a broad effort to offer new reforms to K–12 education, and provide incentives for families to save for higher education. It is made up of several titles:

Title 1—the Education savings Account Act of 1999—Under this title, parents will have more control over their children's education through IRA-style savings accounts that allow parents to save money tax-free for elementary and secondary education expenses. This legislation allows parents, grandparents, or scholarship sponsors to contribute up to $2,000 (post-tax dollars) a year per child for educational expenses while at public, private, religious or home schools—from kindergarten through high school. Last year, this proposal passed both the House and the Senate, but was vetoed by President Clinton.

Title II—Dollars to the Classroom Act—consolidates over 30 separate education programs and sends the money directly to state and local officials to be used to improve educational achievement and learning. The bill requires that 95% of federal education dollars are spent on classroom activities, rather than Washington based bureaucracies.

Title III—Merit Act—provides for an incentive grant program for States to establish and administer periodic teacher testing and merit pay programs for elementary and secondary school teachers.

Title IV—Additional Funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education—provides additional funding to states to meet the federal mandate under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Title V—K–12 Community Participation Act—amends the IRS code to allow for a tax credit for elementary and secondary school expenses and for charitable contributions to organizations which provide scholarship to attend private schools. The maximum credit allow is up to $200 per person in 1999; $150 in 2000; $200 in 2001; and $250 thereafter.

Title VI—Collegiate Learning and Student Savings—extends tax-free treatment to all accumulations of interests and withdrawals from pre-paid college tuition plans.

With the Educational Opportunities and Excellence Act of 1999, we want to lead the Congress in taking the first steps necessary to improve educational opportunities dramatically for every American child. Our agenda—parental control and involvement, dollars to the classroom, state and local authority, and a return to basic academics—will be fully embraced by parents, teachers and administrators, governors and mayors across the country.●

THE AIR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT ACT

● Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, earlier this week, I joined the Chairman and Ranking Democrat on the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation in introducing the Air Transportation Improvement Act. While I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this legislation, I am sorry that we are in the position of introducing a bill that should have been passed last year. Due to a number of unfortunate circumstances, including the unqualified mess at the end of the 105th Congress where 8 out of the 13 appropriations bills had to be lumped into a single massive bill, the Congress failed to complete its duty to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and related programs in the regular order of doing business. As a result, the FAA and important infrastructure programs such as the Airport Improvement Programs, were only extended until the end of March 1999. Thus, we are forced to begin the new Congress by taking up last year's business.

The FAA bill introduced yesterday needs to be one of the first priorities of this Congress. This is the case not only because of the pressing deadline of the short term extension, but also because this legislation contains some very important policy initiatives that will inject more airline competition and improve air service to small communities. While I support the general thrust of this legislation, I still believe that we need to consider some adjustments to this legislation. In particular, I believe that the Small Community Air Service Development Program established under this legislation is too modest in size to have much of an impact. Since the deregulation of the airline industry two decades ago, hundreds of small communities have experienced service degradation and many have lost service altogether. Vast geographic regions of our country have suffered unacceptable geographic isolation as the airlines have withdrawn service in smaller communities. This trend needs the serious attention of the Congress and the Department of Transportation.

Thanks to the bipartisan cooperation on this legislation among the leadership of the Senate Commerce Committee, we have developed the Small Community Air Service Development Program which could go a long way to address the small community air service problems. However, the authorization level proposed in the legislation introduced yesterday does not provide adequate enough resources for this demonstration program to make much of a difference. I hope that as the Commerce Committee works on this bill that we will be able to increase the authorization levels for this important new program.

I also realize that there is some serious controversy surrounding some provisions in this bill. It is my hope that we will be able to reach some fair compromises over the contentious provisions and that this bill will pass the Congress in very short order.

I want to commend Chairman MCCAIN and Senator HOLLINGS for their leadership on this legislation. I know that there is a strong desire on both sides of the aisle to work on this legislation and pass it as soon as possible.●

TRIBUTE TO DAVID W. DENNIS

● Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a much-loved and respected Hoosier statesman, David Worth Dennis, who passed away on January 6, 1999, at the age of 86. David Dennis represented the eastern section of the State of Indiana in the United States House of Representatives from 1969 to 1975. He served with great courage and distinction on the House Judiciary Committee during the difficult Watergate period.

David Dennis' commitment to public service began before and extended beyond his three terms in the House of Representatives. After his graduation from Earlham College and Harvard Law School, he began his career practicing law in Richmond, Indiana. He then served as the prosecuting attorney for Wayne County, Indiana, and then as a First Lieutenant in the JAG Corps of the U.S. Army. He served in the Pacific theater at the end of World War II. Shortly after he came home to Indiana in 1946, he won a seat in the Indiana General Assembly, where he served a total of four terms.

I first met Dave during his service in the Indiana House of Representatives, and I frequently corresponded with him during his United States Congressional service. I was pushing the extension of the ''New Federlism,'' in which states and cities obtained and exercised more responsibility. I also was advocating general revenue sharing in which the federal government would send money to states and cities without strings attached in order that the discharge of these additional responsibilities could be paid for. Dave was enthusiastic about diminishing federal prerogatives, but somewhat less enthusiastic about a distribution of federal revenues.

Our coming together on the campaign trail in 1974 led to enormous mutual respect. The Judiciary Committee was a battleground for efforts to impeach President Richard Nixon. Dave was a very loyal Republican but, even more importantly, he was a scholarly and thoughtful legislator who believed that insufficient evidence had been produced to vote for articles of impeachment in the Committee. As additional evidence withheld by President

Nixon became known, Dave became outspoken in his condemnation of the cover-up and in his demand that President Nixon should resign.

I was privileged to watch at close range a courageous public servant at work who, even in the midst of a partisan election campaign, was never in doubt that he should speak the truth as he saw it and let the chips fall where they may.

Neither Dave nor I were successful in the 1974 campaign, but I looked forward throughout subsequent years to our meetings. We not only reminisced about battles of the past, we discussed the future with expectations that great things could occur in our country through constructive leadership.

David Dennis remained a leader after returning in 1975 to practice law in Richmond, Indiana. Still active in Republican politics, he continued his career as an attorney, where he was loved and respected by the Richmond community. He was known for his fairness and his dedication to the practice of law. Describing Dave's legal calling, a friend quoted in the Richmond Palladium-Item summed up his dedication: ''He understood it as a service to the community. In the same way, David Dennis saw politics as a profession, not a way to get ahead.'' Dave was truly an advocate who loved the roles he played in both the legislative and the judicial systems of our country.

I last saw David Dennis at a Republican dinner in Richmond during the 1994 campaign. He was introduced and received a wonderful ovation from Wayne County Republicans, who revered his service and were so grateful for his continuing citizenship in the community he loved. I was able to keep in touch with news of Dave through his son, William C. Dennis II, who served as a remarkably energetic professor at my alma mater, Denison University.

In addition to his extensive public service, David Dennis is remembered by friends and family as an engaging storyteller and a skilled tennis player. Most of all, he is remembered as a loyal friend and loving husband and father.

My sympathy is with his children, Bill and Ellen, as well as with his four grandchildren as they remember and celebrate the life of an exemplary Hoosier statesman. This standard bearer of a great Quaker tradition at Earlham College added something very special to Indiana Political life. We will miss his wisdom and grace.●

AMERICAN WORKER LONG TERM CARE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 1999

● Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, on Tuesday of this week, Senator GRASSLEY and I introduced S. 36, The American Worker Long Term Care Affordability Act of 1999, a bill creating a model long-term care insurance program for federal employees. Today, I would like to comment on a related long term care bill also introduced on Tuesday by Senator GRASSLEY and myself. S. 35, The Long Term Care Affordability and Availability Act of 1999, would give all Americans a tax deduction for the premiums they pay for long term care insurance.

The cost of long term care has risen to astonishing levels in recent years. In 1995, it averaged $37,000 per year. What this means is that a chronic illness requiring long term care can represent a financial catastrophe for retired Americans and their families. A retired couple might have a pension and basic health care, but the couple is not secure in retirement so long as their financial resources can be depleted by long term care bills.

Many Americans think Medicare covers the cost of long term care. In fact, it covers only the first 100 days of care following a hospital stay. Yet the average nursing home stay is 2.5 years.

Medicaid, unlike Medicare, does cover long term care—but only for beneficiaries who use up their life savings and income first. Medicaid, after all, is a program for the poor, and long term care beneficiaries must become impoverished to qualify. Furthermore, beneficiaries who rely on Medicaid must use providers that are chosen for them—not providers of their own choice. Even with these restrictions, Medicaid currently pays more than $30 billion per year for nursing home care.

The budgetary challenges provided by Medicare and Medicaid are on course to become ever more acute in coming years, as the baby boom generation ages. By 2030, as the number of people over 65 doubles, fully 32 states will have the demographics that Florida has today. The fastest growing segment of the population will be those over 85 with an expected 143% increase by 2030. People over 85 are at least 5 times more likely to reside in a nursing home than people who are 65. In real terms, nursing home expenditures are expected to quadruple in the next three decades.

Mr. President, given the accelerating cost of long term care and the demographic pressures on Medicare and Medicaid and other entitlement programs, Congress started several years ago to provide incentives for people to plan ahead for their own needs. The way most Americans plan ahead for long term care is by purchasing long term care insurance. With insurance, people can be confident that they won't have to impoverish themselves to deal with a chronic illness. They won't have to fall back on the Medicaid program or family members.

In the Kennedy-Kassenbaum health reform legislation in 1996, Congress permitted the deduction of premiums on long term care insurance in the same manner as health expenses. The trouble is that few people—other than the self-employed—can deduct health expenses since the tax code allows only the portion of health expenses over 7.5% of income to be deducted, and then only as an itemized deduction. Thus, a typical employee planning ahead for retirement cannot purchase long term care insurance on a tax deductible basis.

The bill we are introducing today would improve on Kennedy-Kassenbaum by allowing Americans to deduct long term care insurance premiums regardless of whether or not they are self-employed or whether they itemize deductions or have any other health expense. Effectively, the bill would put long term care insurance on a par with pensions. Just as everyone can save for a pension on a tax deductible basis, everyone should be able to purchase long term care insurance in the same fashion.

A better deduction for long term care insurance premiums could also help us by encouraging younger Americans to purchase insurance now, when the coverage is readily affordable. For example, a quality long term care insurance policy purchased at age forty, can cost less than $50 per month.

Mr. President, every person who is covered by long term care insurance is one fewer potential Medicaid claimant. A recent study by the American Council for Life Insurance indicates that long term care insurance has the potential to reduce future out of pocket expenditures on long term care by 40 percent and future Medicaid long term care expenditures by more than 20%. In other words, long term care insurance has the capacity both to protect seniors from financial catastrophe, and to help protect entitlement programs from long term insolvency.

Mr. President, I also want to applaud the President's long term care initiative, which he announced two weeks ago. In proposing a tax credit for individuals who provide long term care to dependents, President Clinton also pledged to increase efforts to educate Americans about the importance of long term care. Both of these proposals are consistent with the legislative effort that Senator GRASSLEY and I are undertaking, and I look forward to working with the White House on this important issue.●

BMC ANTHONY LAWRENCE PETIT AND THE SCOTCH CAP LIGHTHOUSE

● Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the five heros who perished in the Scotch Cap Lighthouse disaster of April 1, 1946—five Coast Guardsmen who gave their lives so that others would survive. The lighthouse keeper was Chief Boatswain's Mate Anthony Lawrence Petit. His crew included Fireman 1st Class Jack Colvin, Seaman 1st Class Dewey Dykstra, Motor Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Leonard Pickering, and Seaman 1st Class Paul James Ness.

Lighthouses will always have a place in our history. They have warned mariners of danger, their crews have rescued survivors in the worst conditions imaginable, and their brilliant lamps